Concepts of Sikh Religion

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As usual Mr Bakhtawar Singh Sehra deserves my grateful thanks for typesetting the text and for preparing a suitable title for the book. I am also grateful to him for arranging the distribution of the books and for storing the stock.

Dr. Amarpreet Singh Deol and the staff of Gurmat Bhawan Mandi Mullan Pur (Ludhiana) usually arrange the printing and transportation of the books throughout the world which is by no means an easy task. I am extremely obliged to them for undertaking so much work as a labour of love.

G.S.Sidhu
June 1, 2007

Abbreviations

AGGS stands for Aad Guru Granth Sahib (The Holy book of the Sikhs)
SGPC stands Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Amritsar
SRM stands for Sikh Rehat Maryada
Introduction

I received my preliminary education in Urdu and Persian because in my school days they were the only languages taught in schools other than English, which was introduced at Secondary level. Whatever information about Sikhism or the Sikh Gurus reached us was through hearsay or through traditional Gianis and Saints. It was mostly mythical and we liked it because it eulogized our Gurus as the miracle performers. We had no access to the original sources, which were in Gurmukhi script. In 1947, when I was to appear in my matriculation examination, the country was divided into India and Pakistan. Panjabi and Hindi took the place of Urdu and Persian as official languages of the Panjab and India, respectively. With Urdu and Persian as my background languages I stood no chance of getting an employment and became virtually illiterate overnight. It was then that I learnt Panjabi and Hindi at home through my own efforts. Although I had learnt to read and write in these languages, my comprehension had not developed much.

At college we studied all our courses in English. In the first two years I had ample time to spare so I started reading books in Panjabi and eventually appeared in Giani (Hons.in Panjabi) as a private candidate obtaining 13th position in the Panjab University. Later I passed the Bhushan Examination in Hindi. Soon I started doing my M.A. in Panjabi and passed obtaining first class marks. These successes not only encouraged me to pass my M.A. in English in good second class but also resulted in putting me in touch with Gurbani. Now I had the opportunity to equip myself with Gurbani through Panjabi and English sources and to rationalize the interpretation of concepts imbibed over the years.

In 1965 I resigned from my job as a Languages Officer in Punjab and settled in Britain. It was then that I felt the need to clarify the Gurmat concepts for my own sake and to pass them on to my children. I founded the Sikh Missionary Society and started learning Gurbani concepts side by side explaining them to the next generation. This book is an attempt to express how I have internalised some of the concepts myself. The reader has every right to differ with my expositions. Since it is an expression of my own understanding of beliefs; I remain open to constructive suggestions and appropriate corrections by the more knowledgeable people.
It is not possible to discuss all concepts in a small book like this. I have therefore taken up only a few that needed attention. If this book finds favour with the readers, I will feel encouraged to write about other concepts, which equally need clarification for my own spiritual benefit as well as for others. I invite criticism from the Sangat and seek help in correcting any mistakes that I may inadvertently have made in these pages. Suggestions and corrections will be gratefully acknowledged.

G.S.Sidhu
January 3, 2007
Foreword

A sudden rise in fundamentalism among the world religions has become a dilemma for future generations. It is often exercised by the people whose existence and subsistence are dependent upon the orthodoxy of their respective religions. The root cause of conflicts is more often economical than religious in nature. Whatever the causes may be, the fact remains that fundamentalism has endangered the lives of common and innocent people of all walks of life. Therefore, it becomes imperative and important to enlighten people, particularly the younger generation, about the basic tenants of various world religions in this postmodern era of confusion and chaos. Mr. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu took up this gigantous task some years ago. His current book, “Concepts of Sikh Religion”, is a timely step in the right direction.

Mr. Sidhu is not a novice in the field of religious studies, he has already written books such as Sikh Religion and Science, Sikh Religion and Women, and a conceptually related book, Panjab and Panjabi. The contents of these books are thoughtfully planned and presented in such a way that even the common reader can grasp them with ease. In Sikh Religion and Science, Mr. Sidhu argues that, “Science and religion in tandem can become a greater force to liberate the mind and help the humans to a fuller and better understanding of reality. It is therefore imperative that knowledge of both is imparted to our next generation and nurtured with equal enthusiasm.” In this age of feminism and women liberation, he remarked, “A society owes much more to its women than to men, and it is commonly believed that ‘behind every successful man is a woman’. Therefore, a society that does not value its women does so at its peril and is likely to suffer sooner or later.” (Sikh Religion and Women)

The contents of the present book, Concepts of Sikh Religion, are selected with meticulous care, and arranged in a coherent sequence. The thoughtful presentation of subject matter helps the reader to grasp the evolution of Sikh philosophy with clarity and ease. Such a deep religious subject
matter is made interesting and understandable with the usage of practical and simple language. The author begins with the relatedness of science and genesis of religious thought and then directly indulges into the explorations of the core of Sikhism called Naam. Sikhism is the religion of Naam employing the self-sustained expression of God’s existence. In other words, God cannot be personified; Naam is the symbol of God’s immanent manifestation through Shabad (word). In a figurative language, the “Word” becomes reincarnation of God in Guru Granth Sahib—the Holy Scripture of Sikhs. The author extends at a great length the discussion about the interrelationship of trilogy of Sikh philosophy inherent in the maxim, God-Word-Universe, and thus charts the essence of religiosity of Sikhism.

The evolution of Naam into Shabad and Shabad into Shabad Guru brings out the genius of Sikh Gurus in developing Sikhism. The author reinforces the Sikh religious ideology that “the Guru is the source of Shabad or spiritual knowledge, ‘the Word is the Guru and the Guru is the Word’ as it is said in Gurbani”. The Great Guru Nanak (1469 A.D.) was the primordial manifestation of God’s Word that laid down the tenets of Sikhism. Mr. Sidhu’s book beautifully relates the role of all the Sikh Gurus in developing and codification of Sikh philosophy embodied in “Guru Granth Sahib”. Importantly, it explains the process of transformation of a ‘Sikh’ of Guru Nanak into the ‘Singh’ of Guru Gobind Singh, and their interrelatedness in carving the evolution of Khalsa.

Guru Nanak’s spiritual ideology of Piri (ਪੀਰੀ) is depicted in the following couplets.

ਲਗੁੱ ਲਗੁੱ ਪੁਰਾ ਪੀਰੀ ਲਾਏ।। ਮਿਲਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਯਾਣ ਜਲੀ ਜੈਲੀ ਅਜੀਦੀ।।
ਇਦਨੁ ਭਤਿਜ਼ ਪ੍ਰਤੁ ਯੰਤੀ।। ਮਿਲਿਆ ਟੁੰਦੀ ਟੁੰਦੀ ਟੁੰਦੀ।। ਬੁੱਧ ਰੰਗ ਚੁੱਕਿ ਪ੍ਰਸਤੁੱਤੀ।। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੰਨਕ (ਗੁਰੂ ਗੰਨਕ ੧੪੧੨)

“If you yearn to play the game of love, step on to my path carrying your head on the palm of your hand. And, once you set your foot on this path, you lay down yur head, and never flee from your duty”. (GGS. P.1412)
This spirit of martyrdom was promulgated into the Miri-Piri concept (Sikh doctrine of politics and religion) by Guru Hargobind Ji. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and final master of Sikhism, gave a practical shape to this doctrine and infused its spirit into his ‘Khalsa’. In the process of transformation of the Miri-Piri concept, a ‘Sikh’ became a ‘Singh. The distinctions among the concepts of ‘Sikh’ and ‘Singh’ along with ‘Sehajdhari Sikh’ and ‘Khalsa’ are also presented in this book for the convenience of common readers of Sikhism.

Towards the conclusion, the author has presented some subjects of general interest such as worship, originality of Sikhism, and has included the answers to commonly asked questions. This has made the book more interesting for both Sikh and non-Sikh readers. S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu really deserves appreciation for producing a marvelous book interpreting the basic concepts of Sikh religion for the younger generation.

Dr. Gurumel Singh Sidhu,
Professor California State University,
Fresno, CA. USA.
Opinions

“Concepts of Sikh Religion” is the latest in a series of pamphlets and books written by S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu. I first came across his prolific writings in English on Sikh religion at the offices of the Sikh Missionary Society in Southall (England) when I went there in 1992 to obtain a volume of AGGS. It was refreshing to find so many pamphlets and booklets on various topics of every day concern in the life of a Sikh, in English. In 1996 when my involvement with the Sikh religion deepened and scarcity of materials in English for our young people growing up in the western world became obvious I remembered my visit to the Society’s offices four years earlier and sought out S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu and requested him to expand upon the booklets that I had come across four years earlier in the format of books for the Sikh youth who were not well versed in Panjabi. He had already done some work on that line and he agreed to our request. Of the many books that he has written we were fortunate to have been able to publish four: *Sikh Religion and Christianity; Sikh Religion and Islam; An Introduction to Sikhism; and Panjab and Panjabi*, for distribution by K. T. F. of N. A. Inc. It is individuals like S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu who have kept the flame of Sikh burning when organizations such as SGPC who were specifically created for that task have not only miserably failed but have also indulged in practices harmful to Sikh with its publication of anti-gurmat books such as Gurbilas Patshahi 6 and support of spurious writings such as the so called Dasam Granth. Sikh qaum is fortunate to have persons like S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu. We wish him good health and long life to keep on serving the qaum that gave him his identity.

Hardev Singh Shergill,
Editor Sikh Bulletin.
President, Khalsa Tricentennial Foundation of North America Inc.,
California, U.S.A.
23.1.2007
I am thankful to Mr. Sidhu for giving me a chance to go through the manuscript of his book on “Concepts of Sikh Religion”. In this book he has tried to explain the in-depth mystical information about Sikh Religious concepts. Normally we find literal translation of mystical words and phrases and once that is back translated, the meanings are completely changed. He has really put a lot of effort in conveying the real concept of Gurbani and that too in English. This shows his in-depth knowledge of Gurbani as well as his ability to translate the Sikh concepts into a foreign language. In this attempt his knowledge of other religions and sects has helped a lot in conveying the differences of Sikh religion from others.

What captivates the reader is the fact that he has very ably removed most of the misconceptions created in the Sikh history as well as interpretation of Gurbani with copious references.

May Akal Purkh Grant Mr. Sidhu health and strength to continue this noble service for a long time to come.

Dr. Sarbjit Singh
Bombay .22.3.2007

Mr. G.S. Sidhu, the author of this book, is not only a scholar of Sikh tenets but a dedicated Sikh as well. His knowledge of various languages and religions helps him delve deep into the spirit of religion and his analytic approach clarifies the issues thoroughly for the general reader.

Principal Ram Singh Kular
Chief Organiser,
Guru Gobind Singh Study Circle
Ludhiana.
Sardar G.S. Sidhu is a well-known writer on Sikhism. He is a well-read true intellectual Sikh with a vast experience in history and philosophy of Sikhism. His present book “Concepts of Sikh Religion” is a very useful handbook for research scholars and ordinary readers. The book is written in a nice readable style and scores of references have been quoted to substantiate the point of view he subscribes to. Questions and answers given in the last chapter further add to the beauty of the book and increase its usefulness. This can be a very good source book for students of religious studies. I feel it should be produced in Gurmukhi script as well. May the Almighty bless the author.

Professor Balvinderpal Singh
Editor
Sada Virsa Sada Gaurav

“Concepts of Sikh Religion” is a valuable book on Sikhism deciphering and decoding a number of Sikh concepts. Mr. Sidhu’s vision and research have here combined to present a very vast spiritual and religious wealth to the reader. Anybody reading this book will feel being escorted to the ultimate truth of Sikhism. The Author’s vast knowledge of the subject deserves full appreciation. It can prove a very good source book for the next generation of the Sikhs and I hope that Mr. Sidhu will continue producing such useful literature.

Karamjit Singh. Aujla,
Gen. Secretary, Sirjanhara
International Sikh Confederation
Ludhiana.
Chapter One
Genesis

From time immemorial human beings have been trying to understand how the universe came into existence and whether there is a creator behind it. Scientists, prophets and thinkers have theorised about this but this complex question is still not considered fully and satisfactorily answered.1.

The ideas expressed by the Sikh Gurus about the universe are very close to the modern thought on the matter. According to the Sikh Gurus there was nothing (void)2 in the beginning except utter darkness. The sun, the moon, and the stars etc did not exist3 only God existed in trance (non-attributed form निर्मुख).4 Then God decided to manifest Himself.5 He gave himself a name (Truth) and created Nature with a big sound (Shabad). Immediately rivers of energy and consciousness (life forms and ideas, emotions etc)6 began to flow. Whatever we see in the Universe is the transformation of God’s self-manifested divine energy (ਸੂਰਜ).

1 “The reality of the Supreme is not a question to be solved by a dialectic, which without personal experience can not give us conviction. Only spiritual; experience can provide us with proofs of the existence of the spirit.” (Dr.S.Radha Krishnan ‘Bhagvad Gita’ 1960 edition)

2 suMnhu Driq Akws aupwey] suMny vrqy jg sbwey (pMnw 1037). Scientists have now peeped inside the Atom and confirm that inside is empty space (void). Scientists also believe something mysterious is there in nature which exerts force, controls motion and binds atoms together. The Sidhs also believed that the Universe developed from void.

3 Arbd nrbd DuMDUkwrw] Drix n ggnw hukmu Apwrw] nw id nu rYin n cMdu n sUrju suMn smwiD lgwiedw (pMnw 1035).

4 kyqy jug vrqy gubwrY] qwVI lweI Apr ApwrY] DMDUkwr inrwlm bYTw nw qid DuMD pswrw hy (pMnw 1024) “ArMB ivc sB AivAkq (bRhm) sI aus qoN hI swrI auqpqI hoeI [ bRRhm ny Awpxy Awp nUM Awp aupwieAw ies leI ausnMU ‘svXMBU’ kihxw hI auicq hY[ [qYqRXw aupinSD II.vii) nw Qw kuC qo ^udw Qw, kuC nw hoqw qo ^udw hoqw ] fboieAw muJ ko hony ny, nw mYN hoqw qo ikAw hoqw (imrzw Zwilb).

5 iqs BwvY qw kry ibsQwru (pMnw 294) qUM pyfu swK qyrI PulI] qUM sUKm hoAw AsQUlI (pMnw 102)
The infinite patterns of energy created infinite forms related to each other in essence. Just as water can manifest itself in snow, ice, steam, rain, clouds and sleet etc so are myriads of forms one and many. At the level of energy therefore, everything is eternally connected with everything else like drops of water in the ocean. It is in this sense that we are within God and God is within us. Unfortunately, we de-link ourselves from the essence and like a frog in a well, remain oblivious to the truth, and thus ensnare ourselves in ego (Haumain).

This process of Nirgun (un-manifested) God becoming Sargun (manifested God) is explained through different allegories. As the spider draws its thread out of itself and is the master of the web it produces, as the shrubs and plants grow from the earth and as the hair grows on the bodies of living beings so is the universe formed out of the imperishable immortal God.

18.7) He manifested Himself and identified Himself as cosmos. In the cosmos He created nature and through nature began watching His creation happily. The scientists call this sound “Big Bang (immensely big sound)”

7. He manifested Himself and identified Himself as cosmos. In the cosmos He created nature and through nature began watching His creation happily.
Having thus created Nature He planted Himself (became attributed) in it like an artist imbedding his identity in his art or the spreading of the sun’s rays. Nature was a form of energy endowed with three fundamental properties, which came into action. They were Light (surya), Sound (shabda), and the Directive principle or law (pravesh) as the controlling factor of the creation.

Energy has the property to transform itself from one form to another. Light energy (surya) changed into Matter, which had two main properties of Sanyog (unification or combination) and Viyog (alienation or decomposition). 

10 “No art can exist either in form, colour, sound, speech or movement which is not in the first place inspired by nature.” (The Waverley Encyclopaedia Vol.1 Page 343)
11 Here Maya means Nature not Maya as some people interpret this word.
12 He created the universe by infusing his light in the dust. The sky, the earth, the vegetation and the water are all created through this process. Sanyog and Viyog are the sources of life, gravity, magnetism, and potential and kinetic energy. Fifth century Greek philosopher Empedocles called them “love” and “hate” forces which constructed the world.
Sound (स्वर) energy is creative, dynamic and intuitive force, which produced vibration (motion or movement) both at physical and mental level and became the cause of the various forms of creation. Vibration enlivens everything, helps reproduction, creates mind in living matter and provides sustenance. The end of motion is death. The Scientists believe that all matter is the solidified form of energy. The sun, the moon, the stars, the electromagnetic waves, light rays, photons etc are all one or the other form of energy. The source of this energy that spread through the universe is consciousness, which in spiritual terms is known as Supper Power (अक्षुष्वऽन्तर=God). In other words we can say that God (अक्षुष्वऽन्तर) is omnipresent but like energy invisible.

According to the psychologists and neurologists, human mind is the centre of consciousness and emotion. It is through this centre that we can remain in contact with the inner world as well as the outer world. Therefore, sound (Shabad which got imbedded in us) keeps us nearer God. The reason why music appeals to us is that it is a gift from God, a part of our sensory constitution, and is related to the first word-sound of God, which resulted in all creation. An anonymous proverb captures the sense rightly. It states, “When a man lives with God, his voice shall be sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn”. Music lifts our soul. “Sound must have been to the primitive man something incomprehensible and therefore mysterious and magical.” (A Short History of Music). In order to sow the seed in the soil, it is first softened by ploughing and then the seed is sown. Similarly to sow the seed of Naam (Gurbani), the mind is softened by music.

14 The word स्वर is from Sanskrit root श्रु, which means moving or flowing. The universe is always in motion and is changing every moment. What our eyes see is not therefore real. Unfortunately for most part of our lives we remain attached to this unreality. The only real thing is our soul, which is a part of God (अक्षुष्वऽन्तर अमर रही-कुरी). Since God is immortal, our soul, which is a part of God, does not die.

15 Forms cannot exist without sound because it is sound that converts matter into different shapes. Experiments were conducted in 1971 on the ‘healing nature of sound’. Sand was placed on a plate vibrated by sound waves. It was discovered that as the frequency of the sound changed the sand grains arranged themselves into different shapes depending on the frequency of the sound. Certain vibrations produced human-like figures. When the same frequency was applied, the same shape returned. The scientists thus proved the formation of planets, solar systems and galaxies from sound. For further information consult “Cymatics” by Vintage books New York.

16 “पौष्प एव पौष्प पर पवनापाश भुज पार्वत्य (पुष्प पश्चाद्)”. When one is immersed in God then he experiences supreme bliss”. Some ancient scholars of Indian music have claimed that listening to music cures many diseases. It may be so but the Sikh Gurus have instructed the Sikhs to concentrate on the ‘Word’ rather than on the music “दुर्ग शेष संता ईशाव नन्दी मनो खोये”. The sanctity and sweetness of Gurbani coupled with music provides ambrosial intoxication to the devotees leading to spiritual propinquity with God.
The all-powerful primordial directive principle created thought, moral force and organisation. It is God’s universally acknowledged authority (Law लङ्कन, नव, भक्ति). 17 It permeates the Universe as the driving force behind it.

Religious men describe the Big Bang sound that created everything as “Word” (Shabad). Word did not exist independently. It was the self-expression of God. 18 Almost all religions therefore acknowledge that the ‘Word’ (Shabad) was God. Different names have been given to ‘Word’ (Shabad) by different religions but they all agree that if man could tune to this primordial word (खबर or नव), he would be able to understand the mysteries of God and reach Him. 19

The way to the ‘Word’ lies through the three divine creations: of Light, Sound and the law (प्रत्यय) mentioned above. There are people who try to approach God through Light (Fire ध्वज) and consider light as sacred. 20 They worship Fire, burn candles, or worship other forms of fire to propitiate God.

Some people worship God’s creative power21 and some like the Turkish Dervishes worship motion by going round and round themselves. The Buddhists also worship motion by keeping the drums moving. Some try to approach God through dancing and singing to the deities.

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17 प्रत्यय तयावर भवान (पंच 1185) प्रत्यय तयावर प्रत्यय वर्ण देवा नीक तथा स्व (पंच 1285)
18 In Christianity the “word” is understood to have assumed the body of Christ. “And the word was made flesh and dwell among us.” (Bible John 1:14) “O Bharta great Prakirti is the womb wherein I cast my seed and from this are born all beings” (Krishna tells Arjuna in Gita XIV: 3). In Sikhism Shabad is the source of everything (दीर्घकात) sabdy gurmukh vyd sbdy hoey gw (gurmukh aupwie smwy the) (gurmukh aupwie smwy the) (gurmukh aupwie smwy the) (gurmukh aupwie smwy the)
19 Explaining the verse “gurmukh nwdM gurmukh vydM” Vinoba Bhave writes, “सदस्योस्यं दिव्यं विद्य मयां देव लाभ घरावल दीवसं देव अणुभाती देव
20 Parsees worship Fire. Also there are hymns in the Rig Veda addressed to Fire. Such as “अन्नभीदियः कहोदियः...” (वर्ण वेद) “सत्स तृं भवति देवान्तिः, सत्स तृं भवति देवान्तिः तृं भवति देवान्तिः तृं भवति देवान्तिः” (वर्ण XV). It is for this reason that Hindu marriages are performed around fire.
21 Hindus worship Shivling (Phallus of Shiva). The sex organ is considered creative.
The Sikh Gurus did not approve the above-mentioned beliefs and methods. They interpreted light as spiritual enlightenment (Brahmigyaan) and require their followers to acquire knowledge. They have stated time and again that human body is the abode of God and its full potential is realised through knowledge. They, therefore, combined music (Rag) with Word (Ved-Knowledge) as a gainful combination to attune with God.

Music is a mysterious divine influence, which stirs the heart to seek God. We all like to sing, hear songs or enjoy music. Spiritually enlightened people talk of hearing celestial music of the spheres (Akgalok Samag), which leads to God. When word (Ved=Knowledge) and music (Rag) come together as in Gurbani, the human spirit is lifted to its spiritual heights.

"Music is the art of the prophets, the only part that can calm the agitation of the soul. It is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us." (Martin Luther). The world is dull without divine music. A lullaby has a soothing effect on the child and helps the child to go to sleep because the lullaby is nearer to the celestial music, which was a part of the foetus when the child was taking shape in the womb. Scientific study has shown that the plants respond to music and grow better and that cows yield more milk listening to music.

In conclusion it can be said that life is nothing but multidimensional eternal consciousness temporarily imprisoned in physical bodies on the endless road to evolution. Since consciousness (energy) does not die, there is no death for life. The Guru says that humans can understand this mystery only through following the divine law. The law of God is God’s volition and cannot be fully expressed by the humans in any form. The Guru has called it “Hukam” or command that must be obeyed without question.

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22 रहमें निर्मल प्रेमी देश जिन्हें रहम रखने के लिये रहम रखने के लिये (वनं 486)
23 अदृश्य देश जिसने धर्म जीवन का रहम रखा (पंजाब 1946) उन दूर दूर सिंदूर छोड़ के दूर दूर जीवन का रहम रखा (संगीत 1984) में संगीत जीवन का रहम रखना है (वनं 817) ने बेंट रखे बेंट रखे लुढ़के लुढ़के हैं।
24 “When I hear music I fear no longer, I am invulnerable, I see no foe. I am related to the earliest times, and the latest. (Thoreau) अयोध्य अक्षण एक लड़के द्वारा (पंजाब 907), सुकस्र्क बशं बशं (पंजाब 727)। Singing Gurbani hymns brings us closer to God.
25 उक्ति जेताँ निर्मल नृत्य न जरूरित मूर्ति, (सहस्र पंडित 32)
Chapter Two

Hukam

In the last chapter we discussed the creation of the universe and mentioned three attributes of the manifested God i.e. Light (ਲੰਘ), Sound (ਖ਼ਤਰ) and Law (ਗੱਢਾ), which overlap in their functions to a great extent because their source is one and the same (God). 26 These attributes of God have no existence separate from God or His manifested form ‘Word’ (Naad or Shabad), which represents all three of them for the living beings. The religious preceptors equate “Word” with God Himself. The mystical, vital, all-embracing, complete super dispensation of God is expressed in the moral world through His Hukam, which humans can understand and enjoy only through the Word. 27 He is immanent in everything through His Hukam and His authority is unquestionable. The Guru expresses all this in Moolmantra, 28 which represents one God, who is Nirgun (without attributes) in His primal aspect and is absolute, eternal, infinite, unborn, and without beginning or end. He is unknowable and has no definite identifiable attributes that humans can assess and evaluate except the three manifested ones through which he expressed Himself in His creation.

Hukam and firman are used in Gurbani as synonyms. They are derived from Persio-Arabic sources where they mean a ‘Command’. The Sikh Gurus have used Hukam to mean ‘divine ordinance’ or “Divine Will” which ensures physical and psychical harmony in the creation.

26 ੵੰਤੀਤੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਧਾਰਤੀ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਦਵਾਰਾ ਲਿਖੀ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਜੈ ਜਾਂ ਅਧੁਨਕਾ ਧਾਰਤੀ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਦਾ ਲਿਖ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੇਲੇ (ਪ੍ਰੇਰਤ ੪੨੨੨) ਤਾਕ ਅਧੁਨਕਾ ਲਿਖ ਕੇਤੇਲੇ (ਪ੍ਰੇਰਤ ੩੪) ਲਿਖ ਲਗੂ ਵਾਂ ਤਾਕ ਕਮੀ ਕੇਤੇਲੇ (ਪ੍ਰੇਰਤ ੫੦੮)
27 ਜੀਵ ਸਾਧਾਰਨ ਭੂਮੀ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਧਾਰਨ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਦਵਾਰਾ ਪੁਰਾਣੀ ਕਮਲੇ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਦਵਾਰੇ ਕਮਲੇ (ਪ੍ਰੇਰਤ ੨੨੫)
28 The Mool mantra explains. God is One (unique). His name is Truth, He is the Creator. He is fearless and has no enmity with anyone. Heis deathless; He does not take birth but exists by himself. He is the greatest and the bounteous.
It governs the microcosm as well as the macrocosm. It operates outwardly as well as inwardly in everything. According to Mr. G.S. Talib “It is the idealist’s vision which sees a Divine purpose in everything, and finding the understanding of the mystery beyond the power of man, puts itself in the attitude of wonder and acceptance”.

The concept of *Hukam* is one of the cardinal concepts of Sikhism and is therefore mentioned in the very first hymn (Japu) of the Holy Granth. *Hukam* has a liberating influence. Guru Nanak says, Understanding the *Hukam* (Divine law) releases one from his ego. Human beings have the choice to follow or not to follow the Divine law (*Hukam*) and thus to either ‘regenerate’ or ‘degenerate.’

Although all creation is subject to *Hukam*, it is not easy to define and understand this term. And yet it is very important to understand *Hukam* because man’s salvation is impossible without understanding it. It is the fundamental principle of life, an expression of the Will of the Conscious Being. Obedience of this law is called *Bhai* or *Bhow* and nothing is outside the pale of *Hukam*. When Gurbani says that man should live in fear of God, it means that man must obey the Divine *Hukam*. Understanding it is to understand the revelation of the nature of divinity. *Gurmukhs, Sadhus, Sants, Bhagats* try to understand it and reach different stages short of goal but a Guru is one who has reached the end of the road. *Reza* and *Bhana*, which mean Divine pleasure, are also used in Gurbani to explain *Hukam*. They mean whole-hearted acceptance of God’s *Hukam*.

Just as it is difficult but not impossible for an ordinary person to understand the complications of the law of a country, it is difficult to understand the divine law (*Hukam*) of God unless one has tried one’s best to learn it.

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29. "Hukmy swjy hukmy Fwhy hukmy myil imlwiedw (PMM 1061) hukmy hI sB swjIAnu rivAw sB vix iqRix (PMM 949)"

30. "Mu hovY qw inrmlu hovY haumY ivchu jwey (PMM 753)"

31. "Hukmu pCwnY su eyko jwnY bMdw khIAY soeI (PMM 1)"

32. "HukmI hovin Awkwr hukmu n kihAw jweI (PMM 1) kQnw krVw swr"

33. "Hukmu mMny soeI (PMM 1350)"

34. "W Bau iliKAw isir lyKu nwnk inrBau inrMkwru scu eyku (464) BY ivic sBu Awkwru hY inrBau hir jIau soie (PMM 586)"
Just as even trained lawyers sometimes go wrong, seekers of God’s law too make mistakes and learn through their mistakes. Since *Hukam* is difficult to understand, the Guru has made it a bit easier to understand by calling it *Naam* (नम् or नूम). Like *Hukam* “Naam” too is beyond description but we do know what it means. It is a part of the creative power of the Lord (Word) through which we can expect to attune with *Hukam*.

Our soul is the abode of God but our mind, being composed of five earthly elements, tends to remain attached to the world. The actions of our mind bind us with earthly things and the emancipation from this situation is possible only through the Guru’s guidance expressing divine Word. Since our soul is always with us, the spiritually elevated people (Saints) always say, “God is within us.” So what is needed is to search diligently within.

To get to God within we have to have self-health. This is achieved by concentrating on Godly virtues (Naam) and by restraining our mind from too much involvement in worldly affairs. The Guru polishes man’s soul to make it suitable for merger in the All-soul (God). Therefore at the very start of the Holy Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak poses a very important question when he says, “How can the soul be purified and the wall of unreality removed?” Immediately after this the Guru also suggests an answer to this question by saying, “It is recorded with the soul that it must follow the spiritual law (*Hukam* इति).”

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35 *eyko nwmu hukmu hY nwnk siqguir dIAw buJwie jIau (pMnw 72) BweI kwnH is MG jI nwBw Anuswr nwm dI pIBwSw hY, iksy vsqU dw boD krwaux vwlw Sbd ijs krky ArQ jwixAw jwvy*[ nwm dy muK Byd do hn iek vsqUv wck jYsy mnuK, bYyl phwV Awidk, dUjw Bwv-vwck jYsy suMdrqw, kTorqw, BlmxsaU, Br`px Awid*, gu rbwxI ivc nwm krqwr Aqy aus dw hukm boDk Sbd BI hY” *(mhwn koS pMnw 697)*

36 *Awqm mih rwm rwm mih Awqm (pMnw 1153) Awqm rwm rwm hY Awqm (pMnw 1030)*

37 *khqu nwnk iehu jIau krm bMDu hoeI [ ibnu siqgur Byty mukiq n hoeI (pMnw 1128)*

38 *puhp miD ijau bwsu bsqu hY mukr mwih jYsy CweI [ qYsy hI hir bsy inrMqir Gt hI Kojhu BweI [bwhir BIqir eyko jwnhu iehu gur igAwnu bqweI [ (pMnw 684) vw PI Anu&uiskum APlw quibsrUn (He is within. Can’t you see? Quran 51:21)*

39 *kIsq goXw ko murwid idl n XwPq [ hr kis bw nPis Kud krdw  gzb = AYsw koeI nhIN ijs ny mn nwl lVweI lVI hovy qy iPr mn dI murwd nw pweI hovy (BweI nMd lwl) bMdy Koju idl hr roj nw iPru pryswnI mwih (pMnw 727)*

40 The word *svsQ* (Health) is derived from Sanskrit root स्व which means ‘Self and स्थाश means stable. We are healthy only when our mind settles down and concentrates on itself (स्वात्म)’.

41 *ijsqy aupijAw nwnkw soeI iPr hoAw (m:5 pMnw 1193) [ ijs qy aupjy iqsu mwih smwey (pMnw 282)*

42 “*ikv sicAwrw hoeIAY ikv kUVY qutY pwil”? hu kim rzweI clxw nwnk iliKAw nwil (pMnw 4) Again Guru Arjan Dev says, “*गिनित नसिंग ने जीत दूध नसिंग फिरना* (ज्य 9) It is etched on your mind and body from the start that you should remain attached to the Lord. बुधबाबा जीतु सुधा बाबी अनी सुधा सहिष्नु” (ज्य 707)
2.1 Naam

In ordinary daily use of the language the word “Naam” means ‘Name’. We give a name to something on the basis of our knowledge about its characteristics. When that name is heard we immediately know what or whom we are talking about. Such names can be called descriptive names. About God’s undefined (Nirgun) form we know nothing because God is ineffable (Agaur) and inaccessible. No descriptive name could be assigned to His Nirgun form; only an abstract name could be given. Different religious people therefore gave different names to Nirgun God. Guru Nanak gave Him the best name that he could think of. He called Him सच्च (Truth or Reality which transcends everything).

Philosophers believe that the description of Truth can only be truth and nothing else. When God became Sargun (defined); He could not be anything new. Since Guru Nanak called undefined (Nirgun) name Satnam (Moolan), which means the Name given to Truth. Guru Arjan Dev explained the reason behind this by saying that “All tongues address Him through coined names (based on attributes) but his real name is still “Truth+ Naam”, (Moolan) the eternal name that existed even before the beginning of time. Guru Nanak used this name at the beginning of his oft-sung hymn Japu, which lays the foundation of the Sikh Scripture.

43 Naam also means the Guru’s word (eternal truth) or the ‘All pervading spirit’. Naam cannot be accurately defined. It is an emotional psychic or aesthetic feeling or an experience of God’s wonder.
44 Moolan is the creative conscious energy which became the basis of the creation.
45 Coined names keep changing (in interpretation) as time passes. The name “Allah” was used for a statue in Mecca later it began to be used for God. The word “God” was the name of Teutonic gods and goddesses later it became a Christian God (Almighty), Jehovah was the name of a particular god of the Assyrians Later when they converted to Judaism, the name began to be used for Jewish God. But Truth (Moolan) does not change.
He stated, “God is one. His name is Satnaam”\footnote{The word Naam is derived from Sanskrit नाम, which means ‘strength, energy or power’. The word also means ideal, true, primal or correct. According to Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha भाई कहन सिंह नाभा, Naam means नाम की रहयो तथा सीखिए सीखिए (देखे भाग्य लें जितने जुले).}. Satnam is not bound to space, time or human interpretation. It is beyond change, eternal and God’s unquestionable and indescribable uniqueness.

In Sikhism Naam is therefore considered the most important primordial universal principle (nature of God) directing and supporting the creation. It is creative, dynamic, immanent, and intuitive power, the cause of force, motion, growth, and disintegration, in fact everything. It creates, sustains and directs the manifest cosmos through its three attributes mentioned above. Divine Naam is thus the ocean of possibilities. “All creation is permeated with Naam and there is nothing without it”.\footnote{In Arabic Naam is called al-badi (The marvellous). It is defined as the originator and the ocean of possibilities from which the tidal waves of revelation flow.} The Guru says that the real knot of Truth is undone for those who study Gurbani with a devoted and fully attuned mind. The Guru’s Shabad (Word)\footnote{“ज्ञान की ज्ञान के ज्ञान के ज्ञान के ज्ञान” (पं. 4) “नाम के प्रांवे मार्ग संत हम दे प्रांवे बंदु कुर्मद” (पं. 284). In Arabic Naam is called al-badi (The marvellous). It is defined as the originator and the ocean of possibilities from which the tidal waves of revelation flow.} opens the doors and the Shabad is called Naam. On account of this Sikhism is sometimes also called Naam Marg or the Religion of Naam.
Chapter Three
Anhad Shabad

As has been discussed earlier when God manifested Himself a “Word” or sound was produced.\(^{51}\) Scientists and thinkers believe that the reverberations of that event are still going on and the hissing sound they catch through their instruments is a part of that original sound. Religious preceptors however tell us that this sound was God Himself and that we all have a part of this sound stored within us. Therefore to understand God it is necessary to attune to that sound within. The spiritually awakened people hear this sound themselves, acquire spiritual knowledge and understand the divine law. Then they live accordingly and try to convey the celestial sound (अनहद शब्द) through their own word or writings to their followers advising them to live under its spiritual influence.\(^ {52}\)

The Muslims claim that the Sound (Word) has been fully described in the Holy Quran and that the essence is contained in the Kalima (Bismillah Ur Rehman Ur Rahim), which if repeated, can lead to the mystical sound

\(^{51}\) Most religious leaders describe this mystical celestial musical sound as ‘Limitless’ (अनहद, अनमी) "अनहद शब्द छोटा नहीं, अनहद शब्द नहीं। अनहद शब्द "The sound (अनहद शब्द) has no beginning and no end that is why it is called limitless” (Hazrat Shah Niaz). “The world is supposed to have been created by an initial sound when it emerged from the primordial abyss. It became light and little by little part of the light became matter. But the materialization was never absolutely complete because each material thing or object continued to retain more or less some of the sonorous substance out of which it was created.” (‘Music Therapy’ by Marius Schneider – Hutchinson London 1975) “Perhaps music is the only particle of the Divine essence that man has been able to capture” (Jaques Chailley).

\(^{52}\) There are five spiritual stages (known as Khands) and in each stage the Anhad sound is heard in a different tune. At some places an indication of the sound has also been given in Guru Granth Sahib. For example, “पंड शब्द निरंजन धन सुंदर (drum) कवर (stringed instrument) सिंह (Conch) गन गवज (thunder) (ਪੰਜ ੫੭੬). These sounds are astral and psychic not produced by any material instruments.

The Yogis call it अनहद शब्द (sound produced without friction) and try to hear it through yogic exercises. गुरु ग्रंथ साहिब कहते हैं कि अनहद शब्द (अनहद शब्द) को पाइये। “सम अनहद शब्द की ध्यान की दिखाई सम्पन्न (अनहद शब्द) की ध्यान की अनूठे दृष्टि है” (ਪੰਜ ५५)
(Word) and therefore God. Similarly the Hindus claim that all secrets of the ‘Word’ have been mystically copied into the Hindu scriptures and that the repetition of certain incantations of their scriptures (OM or Gayatri Mantra) can lead to the reality of the Anhad sound. The Sikh Gurus have recorded their findings in the Guru Granth Sahib. Since the hymns of the Guru Granth Sahib describe the divine “Word” or “Naam”, they themselves are divine and lead to God. Sikhism advises Guru’s help in attuning to Anhad Shabad (ਅਨਹਦ ਸਹਾਬ) and outlines five stages (known as five Khands). According to Sikhism the primordial sound is not a physical sound that we can hear with our ears. It is something, which can be felt only with our inner soul. The nature of this Sound can be related to all types of physical and spiritual phenomenon, which transcend our imagination.

3.1 The mystical Word

Mystical word (ਅਨਹਦ ਨਵਦ) is the celestial ‘Word’ that created the Universe and all that is in it. In religious circles it is believed that consciousness can transcend time and space and become one with the Almighty through this Word. The Guru states that if this celestial mystical ‘Word’ is imbibed, it leads to a blissful stage (ਸੁਹਵਰਤ). At this stage there is no beginning or end and therefore no death. The only condition is that this ‘Word’ should be firmly implanted in our heart but it is not easy to understand and internalise this ‘Word’ without the help of a true Guru.

Some Sikh Scholars believe that the mystical word (with all its attributes) is spread all through the Holy Granth and cannot be identified separately. Therefore it is necessary that the whole of Guru Granth Sahib should be read time and again as Naam to implant the ‘Word’ in our hearts. Others think that although it is gainful to read the whole Guru Granth Sahib, the Mool mantra (The preamble of Guru Granth Sahib) is the incantation that contains the essence of the divine “Word” and its repetition is sufficient.

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53. iwm wqshj hwh inrMkwr hY iqsu jyvfu Avru n koie (PMnw 515) gurmuiK AMimRqu pIvxw vwhu vwhu krih ilv lwie (PMnw 515)
54. The word ‘mystical’ is derived from ‘mu’, which means ‘to close’. When a person closes every avenue of sense perception to withdraw the mind into itself from external objects, he becomes worthy of receiving divine illumination. Mysticism is therefore “Withdrawing into self.” Since ‘self’ is a copy made in the image of God, the seeker can know all he desires to know through mysticism.
55. eyku sbdu myrY pRwin bsqu hY bwhuiV jnim n Awvw (PMnw 795) Anhd sbid suhwvxy pweIAY gur vIcwir (PMnw 21)
Yet others believe that “Waheguru” is the simplified word, the repetition of which, brings in bliss and all other spiritual merits. The intellectuals however argue that mere repetition of any ‘Word,’ however sacred, carries no merit. One should consciously understand and concentrate on what one repeats and why. Here we will discuss the oft repeated word “Waheguru” and try to understand what it means.

The more we try to understand the world around us, the more wonderstruck we are. How a seed sprouts, how the big trees transport tons of water upward daily supplying every leaf, how a flower produces fragrance and colour and above all how the planets in the cosmos keep to their assigned distances and routes. The Divine life-current pulsates almost everywhere. Wonder of wonders is that if an atom, the minutest (subtle) particle of matter, is smashed it turns out to be empty space with invisible electrons revolving around an imaginary centre. If one has the time to read nature one cannot fail to be wonder struck. When one is wonder-struck with God’s creation and utters “Waheguru” (You are wonderful Lord) in appreciation of His benedictions only then “Waheguru” assumes significance. Mere repetition without concentration on the wonders of God carries no merit.

3.2 Waheguru

We humans are like a tiny speck of dust in the vast ocean of expanse and are not capable of thoroughly appreciating or imagining the seen and unseen wonders of nature. We cannot comprehend the infinite creation and the creator.

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56 मन पूर्वी दे भी मस दे वह नवनुभाव वहवह बीचक बीचक, “जीवन भले जब भी भले जमल वर्तितकु बेडी मह नहा” (साहि म 9 ब) 2. निषेध के भी जो मह । for understanding Waheguru read Bhai Gurdas 13/2, 11/3, 12/17, 4/17 40/22 etc.
57 (1) बचन प्राव जीवन भले, जलज जन्मवाद जब विद्वान 7 वें ह सुवादवाद मनिविव, सत्सं वर्तितकु सब भविक्ष (चुटी संवती) सत्सं निषेध के उद, वर्तीकु निगमित हिंदे बहें (मुला भुक्त) (2) वर्तीकु निगम हिंदे भरतसी। वर्तितकु ले विद्वान बहें (विद्वान किवें लेंग हिंद)।वर्तितकु ले समाज का बड़ा भविक्ष अक्केर (चुटी संवती कब नहं) रवी (चुटी संवती)
58 The word is very close to the *Quranic* word *Hayrah* a derivation from *Takhayar* (wonderment or marvelling). The Prophet is reported to have said, “Lord increase me in marvelling at Thee”. The Sikhs do not ask the Lord for any increase in wonder but repeat the Word on all occasions. It has been given to them already. The Sikh lives in wondement.
59 बचन भले जब भी जीवन भले जब न जीवन। जब दसरक्ष (जुआ) निषेध के जब भी जीवन (चुटी 899)

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Waheguru (ਵਾਹੇਗੁਰੂ) is not a mantra\textsuperscript{59} in the sense that it can subvert laws of nature if repeated \textit{ad infinitum} on the other hand it is a catalyst that helps one understand and appreciate God’s wonders. It is a feeling or realization of the vastness and wonders of the Almighty. All the known knowledge of the humans is inadequate to describe the unknowable God. Therefore the Gurus said that whatever words come closest to the Truth (ਮਿਲਾਤੀ) and wonder (ਕਦੁੱਬ) are sacred.\textsuperscript{60} As a start they can help us in delving into the mysteries of God and appreciation of nature. The Sikhs, therefore, prefer ‘Waheguru’ because unlike other names of God (like, Ram, Rahim etc) it does not refer to only one attribute of God but elevates the devotee into mystical wonderment (ਦਿੱਤਾਲੜੀ) of innumerable attributes of God. It is as if getting drowned into the ocean of God’s mysterious ocean of spirituality.\textsuperscript{61} The Sufis too speak of “seeking to be drowned” (ਇਸਟਿਹਾਰਾਗ). When the self loses itself into the wonders of the creator, the temporal in the eternal, the finite in the infinite (\textit{fana-fi-Allah} in Sufi terminology), the human journey is complete.

Thus we see that \textit{Waheguru} incorporates all God’s greatness and qualities realising which a man feels wonder-struck. It connects man directly with God. Its meaning can be realised only through extreme intuitiveness which in turn attracts God’s grace.

In our daily life we use the word \textit{ਕਦੁੱਬ} only when we like a thing very much. When Kabir was highly impressed by somebody reciting God’s praises, he himself felt spellbound and started saying, “Wonder of wonders how he sings. His singing of God’s eulogies captivates my mind.” \textsuperscript{62}

According to Guru Nanak no one can challenge God in beauty and wonder and no one is like him. “Wondrous is He who gave us life”.\textsuperscript{63}

\textsuperscript{59} The word ਮੌਰੀਆ actually means ਮੌਰੀਆ ਦੇ ਮਾਂਕਾ. The word ਮੌਰੀਆ (minister) is derived from it. Some people interpret it as “ਵਾਹਲਾਟੀ” = ਵਾਹਲਾਟੀ. Most people use it to mean charms and incantations that can subvert the laws of nature. The Sikh Gurus condemned such practices claiming magical potency. ਉੱਤੇ ਮੌਰੀਆ ਦੇ ਸਤਾ ਕਰੁਕਾਰ ਦਿਰੀ ਮੌਰੀਆ ਨਾਲ ਲਗਾਦਾ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 264) ਉੱਤੇ ਮੌਰੀਆ ਦੇ ਸਤਾ ਕਰੁਕਾਰ ਦਿਰੀ ਤੋ ਘੱਟੀ ਧਰਤੀਆਲਾਟੀਆਲਾਟ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 919)

\textsuperscript{60} ਕਦੁੱਬ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੰਘ ਦੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਇੱਕ ਅਲਖੇ ਦੇ ਭਾਗਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਦੀਰਚਾਲਕ ਦੇ ਘੱਟੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਆਲਿਆ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਇਆ ਦੀਰਚਾਲਕ ਦੇ ਘੱਟੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਕੋਈ ਤੀਰਥ ਦੀਰਚਾਲਕ ਦੇ ਘੱਟੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਕੋਈ ਤੀਰਥ ਦੀਰਚਾਲਕ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 662)

\textsuperscript{61} ਦੇ ਤੇ ਕੁਝੇ ਕੁਝੇ ਦੀਰਚਾ ਤੋ ਦੀਰਚਾ ਦੇ ਤੋ ਜੋਰ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਤੋ ਆਲਿਆ ਤੋ ਕੁਝੇ ਕੁਝੇ ਤੋ ਆਲਿਆ ਤੋ ਕੁਝੇ ਕੁਝੇ ਤੋ ਆਲਿਆ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 662)

\textsuperscript{62} ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ ਕਦੁੱਬ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 478)
“Wondrous is He who supports me.”
Guru Amar Das repeated the same wonder in his own words. He was of the opinion that if we consciously and devotedly internalise the word ‘Wahu’ (ਵਹੁ) for the great enlightener God we eventually become one with him. Guru Ram Das again clarified the concept by saying that only the spotless, taintless, unfathomable, limitless God is ਵਹੁ (Full of wonders).  

For a devoted Sikh, God is the primal Guru. Therefore the word Wahu (ਵਹੁ, ਵਹੁ) came to be combined with Guru (ਗੁਰੂ) to make it Waheguru.

Considering the importance of the word and experiencing its spiritual merits Bhai Gurdas wrote, “Waheguru is the basic concept (ਕੁਜ਼ਮੂਰਚ) that frees us from ego”.  

It is often argued that simple reading or repetition of a word has no value because the mind is excluded from participation unless we understand the meaning. Mere mechanical repetition of Waheguru carries no value. However, when the word is said after internalising the wonder and awe of God, then it has a value and a merit beyond description. Those who repeat it consciously are penetrated by the consciousness that they are partaking of the divine Word. Their persistent reading or repetition becomes a long drawn out invocation of the divine Naam. It was to invoke this mystical divine invocation that Guru Gobind Singh included the word ‘Waheguru’ in the daily greetings of the Sikhs.

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63 (1)ਰਾਜਵੂ ਰਾਜ ਜਿਸ ਕਰੀ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੰਘੁ (ਰੋ: ਦੇਕਾ 326) ਰਾਜਵੂ ਰਾਜ ਜਿਸ ਕਰੀ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੰਘੁ
64 ਬਿਹਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਾਹ (ਦਿਸੰਬਰ 76/2) ਵਿੱਚ ਦਿਸੰਬਰ ਤੋਂ ਵੀਚ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨੇ ਦੋ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ
65 ਬਿਹਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਾਹ (ਦਿਸੰਬਰ 76/2) ਵਿੱਚ ਦਿਸੰਬਰ ਤੋਂ ਵੀਚ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨੇ ਦੋ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ
66 ਵਹੁ ਵਹੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ
67 ਵਹੁ ਵਹੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ ਸੰਘੁ
Some people believe that every mystical word contains aphoristic formulations, which can help the soul into transcending the mind and entering into the intellectual intuition. They consider repetition a good start or a preliminary exercise. Once this stage is passed the devotee lives in wonder and begins to understand what is being repeated and why and at that stage there remains no need to repeat the ‘Word’ orally.68

3.3 Surt –Shabad:

“Word consciousness” (Surt-Shabad) is the integrated awareness imbibed by the soul through the word and represents subliminal, intellectual and super-sensuous intuitive perception. This is achieved when the mind is attuned to the meanings of what we utter. A meaningless sound like the chirping of birds can please us but leads us nowhere and provides no information or direction. Without direction and knowledge we cannot travel on the path of spirituality. The next and the most important stage therefore is to repeat (or hear) the word and to imbibe its meanings, which leads to spiritual bliss.69 This is described by saying that one should make the Shabad his Guru and his concentration the follower of the Guru.70 In other words concentration must follow the Word. Bhai Gurdas puts it in simple straightforward words and says, “A Gurmukh’s life is meaningful only if he reads/hears Gurbani and internalises its essence.”71

Even though God and mystic are two separate identities like ice is to water, their essence is one. As the electromagnetic current from a broadcasting station is the same in all radio receivers, God’s grace is showered equally on all who tune to Him and attain this spiritual stage. At this stage the difference between God and God’s men (the Gurus) gets obliterated or at least narrowed.72

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68 ibnu ijhvw jo jpY ihAwie, koeI jw xY kYsw nwau (pMnw 1256) aUcw nhI khxw mn mih rhxw Awpy jwxY jwxo (pMnw 580)
69 bkqY bik sbd sunwieAw sunqY suin mMin bswieAw kir krqw auqris pwrM khY kbIrw swrM (pMnw 972) gurubwxI khY syvku jnu mwnY prqiK gurU insqry (pMnw 982) nwnk ijnI suix kY mMinAw hau iqnw ivthu kurbwxu (pMnw 750)
70 sbdu gurU suriq Duin cylw ] (pMnw 943) sbd gurU gur jwxIAY, gurmuiK hoie suriq Duin cylw (BweI gurdws)
71 gurmuK jnm skwrQw gurbwxI piV smJ suxyhI (BweI gurdws vwr 1/3)
72 hmySw suhbiq mrdwin h`k qlb goXw[ ik qwlbwin ^udw vwslwin A`lh AMd = hy goXw qUM hmySw r`bI ipAwirAw dI sMgq dI ie`Cw kr ikauNik r`b dy qWGI r`b nwl ie`k im`k huMdy hn [(BweI nMd lwl)
Chapter Four
Khand

Religion at its highest level is mysticism. When a mystic succeeds in establishing an unavering and unflinching relationship with God then he is blessed with grace in abundance and is said to have met God. This state is known in Sikhism as Sach Khand nivas or Sehaj Awastha.

For achieving this blissful state man has to strive hard. The process starts by restraining the mind from worldly cravings and attachments and attuning the consciousness (Surt) through the Guru’s Shabad with primal Word (nwend). Guru Nanak has outlined five stages called Khands (regions).73 The destination is Sach Khand (The region of the True lord). This is where the spark of human light merges with the divine light and the individuality vanishes into eternity.

4.1 The journey:

God planted Himself mystically in everything. God’s presence in the human body is epitomised as ‘Soul’ (Awqmw). As a rule the soul should be supreme in the human body and should control all actions but humans have also developed mind, which is composed of five worldly elements.74 Being a part of the earthly elements the human mind is more attracted towards earthly pleasures than towards the divine soul. It has become a slave to material comforts and is a great impediment in the way of our communication with the universal soul. Gurbani compares the mind with a monkey who puts his hand in a narrow pot to extract grain.

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73 kaurhe keh langh langh langh pura dero sipas dikhla, eka keh ko kalpi kahere utt (Kaurhe keh langh 387)
74 dero muh langh dihu langh chand, dero muh langh utt de langh (Kaurhe keh 342)
His hand gets trapped in the pot but being greedy he does not open his fist and is eventually caught and made to dance from door to door. Thus our mind, which should be a useful weapon for the soul, becomes its enemy dragging it into worldly attachments. Like the parasite vine, *(cuscuta amurensis)* it starts destroying the human soul. The religious preceptors instruct us to reverse the process and travel on the right path to God.

“Guru Nanak realised that a religion, if it is to be a living force, must be a practical religion, one that teaches mankind not how to escape from the world but how to live worthily in it, not how evil is to be avoided, but how it is to be met or overcome.” C.H. Payne

4.2 The Yogi’s Way:

The Yogi’s method of freeing the soul involves physical exercises. In Gurbani the Yogi’s methodology is termed *Neuly Karam*. The Sikh Gurus did not approve the Yogi’s method.

The Yogi’s process is termed *Oondh Kanwal Vigas*, which means turning upturned *Kanwal* flower (Lotus) back into position. They believe that through Hathyoga or Tantric Yoga (certain complex physical exercises) the energies of the body can be concentrated on certain points.

Yoga also has a darker side. Blood sacrifices, consorting in crematoriums, propitiating darker forces, drinking wine etc are also adopted by some Yogis known as Aghori. The Gurus call them *Sakat*, which stands for misguided reprobates and evildoers.

There are six sets of exercises known as *BMD*, *Aach*, *Chak* or *Mudra* (Muladhar, Svadhistan, Manipura, Anahat, Visudhajua, and Ajna). By doing these exercises, the Yogis believe to correct the position of the lotus shaped *Nabh Kanwal*, which contains the *Amrit*. Once this is done the *Prana* (life force) is liberated from *Ida and Pingla* nerves and is made to enter through the aroused *Kundalni* (coiled she-snake) into Sahasra. Doctors and physiologists have so far failed to find any *Kundalni* in the human body. The Sikh Gurus do not mention *Kundalini* in the Guru Granth Sahib. The only mention of *Kundalini* we find is by Bard (Bhatt) Gyan where he says, "*Kundalini* is disentangled through the Sangat and the Guru multiplies the *Parmanand* (eternal bliss) manifold. According to Sikhism coils of the so-called *Kundalini* are nothing but the conglomeration of evil desires, which must be sublimated for the proper development of the human being. See Guru Granth Sahib pages 12, 22, 23, 91, 108, 224, 612.
It is believed that by adopting these cumbersome techniques the *Upturned Kanwal flower* is brought into its correct position and a state of bliss is achieved. In their language it is called awakening the Kundlani or *Kaivalya* (Aloneness). The process is very arduous and even dangerous. The Sikh Gurus say that for the Sikhs the Sangat and the practice of the Guru’s word does all that is required to achieve the end. For the Sikhs the *upturned Kanwal* is corrected through Gurbani. 79

4.3 The predicament

Man has a dual nature. His connection with the world outside attracts most of his attention to the detriment of his inner self, which can connect him to God. This turns him into a degenerate (*Mannukh*) behaving as a slave of ego (*Haumai*).80 The antidote lies in controlling the mind and becoming regenerate (*Gurmukh*). Gurbani explains that man’s religion stands in between these two extremes to guide him. “Pulled by the two forces of worldliness and spirituality he wastes his life in indecision.”81 Some times he is attracted by his soul and tries to detach himself from the worldly shackles but most of the time he is misguided by his mind into worldly entanglements. The Guru describes this predicament by saying, “Both his arms are pulled in two different directions and therefore he loses them both.”82 Baba Farid also states this tragedy of man very clearly when he writes, “The valuable life is wasted in indecision and the physical body ends up in a heap of dust.”83

The indecision is due to the attractions of the world and its pleasures usually expressed by using the term *Maya* (mammon). Our mind is a creation of the matter therefore it seldom ever breaks its bond with Maya.
Along with many other maladies of Mayā it develops five deadly sins of anger, greed, lust, worldly shackles and arrogance etc. Just as nothing can be contained in a tumbler if it is upside down, God’s love cannot be enshrined in our heart unless we prepare it to receive Naam. Figuratively, a vessel can contain something only if it is emptied of the previous contents. We have to wipe our minds clean of the cesspit of deadly sins and worldly attachments and only then can we hope to attune with God. Mayā, which creates ego, is the antithesis of truth. The more one detaches from worldly pleasures and attractions, the more chances he has of realising the reality of human existence and its goal.

This is sometimes expressed by saying that man has to develop special eyes to see God. These are mind’s eyes, which can grasp the reality of human existence and help the devotee live within the celestial law. To develop the mind’s eyes the guidance of a preceptor is of utmost importance. The divine preceptor (Guru) directs the novitiate on to self-realisation. Since he has himself traversed the path of God realization he makes the process easy for the devotee through his expert guidance. This process is not as easy as its sounds because worldly attachments do not disappear so easily. Perseverance and full faith in the Guru are absolutely necessary. “The inner light and music are enjoyed when the true Guru helps solve the problem”. The human mind begins to understand the divine laws (Hukam) and slowly and steadily acquires the merit of knowing the lawgiver (God). The Guru clearly delineates the process for us as follows.

84 nwim smwvY jo BWfw hoie aUNDy BwfY itkY n koie (pMnw 158)
85 vsqU AMdir vsqu smwvY dUjI hovY pwis (pMnw 474)
86 haumY nwvY nwil ivroDu hY duie n vsih iek Twie ] (pMnw 560)
87 nwnk sy AKVIAW ibAMin ijnI ifsMdo mw iprI (pMnw577) ] loiex dyiK rhy ibsmwdI icqu Aidsit lgweI (pMnw 910)
88 AMqir joiq sbdu Duin jwgY siqguru Jgru inbyrY (pMnw 489). iciq mih Twkur sic vsY BweI jy gur igAwn smoie (pMnw 637)
“When the ears attune only to the glories of God, the eyes see only the benevolent saints in everybody, the tongue sings the virtues of the ineffable, the mind contemplates on the perfect Lord and hands and feet perform the service of the God-orientated people only then O Nanak can one expect God’s Grace.”

This stage is easily reached through following the instructions of the Guru without question.

When a Vedanti attains this spiritual height he begins saying Brahmamasmi (I am God), when a Sufi reaches this stage he says Analhaq (I am God). When a Sikh attains this spiritual position he cries out, I am yours, I am yours because this is what he is taught to say right from the beginning.

4.4 The Guru’s way:

For a Sikh the inward devotion to the Guru and His word is the start and also the end. Without understanding the ‘Word’ the world is simply blind and the outward observances or external ritual practices are useless. The Guru delineated five stages before the devotee can enjoy eternal bliss. These five stages are called Khands.

The Guru directs the novitiate to set his target at discovering himself and to make it his main aim in life. This done the novitiate practises spiritual living as directed and engages in philanthropic activities, which help him

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91 The travelling of the pure consciousness (केवक) through five levels is also mentioned in the Upanishads where the five stages are named Annamayakosa, Pranamayakosa, Manomayakosa, Jijnamayakosa, and Anandamayakosa. There the description and functions are very turgid and subtle and do not match with the five Khands described by Guru Nanak. In her book titled “Mysticism” Miss Underhill also mentions the five stages of human enlightenment as follows: (1) Awakening of the self (जवकर्षण) (2) Purification of the self (सुसृत) (3) Illumination of the self (विहि) (4) Dark night of the soul (विलोकन) (5) Unitive life (साधन). Muslims call these five stages Royal, Jib, Dukul, Mubaba, and Rahaj (क्षय) “यक्षयाकसा तीन सूती दो, दो सूती तीन सूती दो, तीन सूती नाती एँ, नाती तीन नाती एँ” रोयल दुकल महैल रहाज (क्षय) नाती तीन महैल नाती एँ, नाती तीन नाती एँ (रहाज). Although the number of spiritual stages is the same in many religions, the stipulations are different. For example the Muslim Shariat (requiring Kalima, Namaz, Roza, Zakat and Hajj etc) has nothing to do with Sikhism. The Sufi Muqams (Nasut, Jabrat, Malikut, and Lahut) and Tariqat do not correspond with anything in Sikhism. Nasut pertains to sensuality, which is discredited in Sikhism.
control selfishness greed, pride and undue attachment.

(1) Dharam Khand (Plane of righteousness)

In the Dharam Khand, which is the first step, the devotee learns the laws of social living and understands his duties and responsibilities. He attends to the inculcation of virtues and practises truthful living. He discharges all his worldly responsibilities to his family and society and yet works for his own spiritual emancipation and self-culture. The goal he sets for himself is not individual uplift but collective redemption of the society. Slowly and steadily he realises his past mistakes and instructs his mind to remain alert and not to be a victim of the five thieves (sex, anger, greed, attachment and ego).

Inward devotion to the Guru and His word is very helpful and is the start. It does not involve any outward observances or external ritual practices but inward discipline of humility, firm faith, perseverance, love, mercy, and devotion. Righteous and compassionate deeds, strive for justice and virtue, respect for life etc boost a novitiate’s resolve and strengthen his trust in the Guru’s word. The love for the Guru’s word becomes his prop and he remembers it at all times (naam Simran). All his actions are performed under self-imposed fear of God.

The rules of this stage have been simplified by saying “Naam Japo, wand shako, Dharam di kirt Karo” (pray, share your earnings with others and labour honestly).

By living like this the devotee realises that “Nights, days, weeks and seasons; wind, water, fire and the nether regions—in the midst of these, God established the earth as a transitory home for Dharma (Virtuous living). He placed the various species of beings in the universe. Their names are uncounted and endless. By their deeds and their actions, they shall be judged.” The devotee begins to realise that his own self is a storehouse of spiritual secrets.
(2) Gian Khand: Wismad (plane of divine knowledge)

The devotee now realizes that “there is but one and only one thing that counts”\footnote{102} and it is the acquisition of knowledge leading to unaltering belief in God. He, therefore, frees himself from unnecessary entanglements of the temporal world and diligently devotes his energy in concentration and on acquiring spiritual knowledge.\footnote{103}

The more intuitional knowledge he acquires the more his thirst for knowledge grows and eventually he becomes fully knowledgeable.\footnote{104} Now he finds that “spiritual wisdom reigns supreme. The Sound-current (Naad) vibrates amidst the sounds and the sights of bliss”.\footnote{105} He becomes aware of his own insignificant existence in the universe where there are millions of stellar spheres, mystic marvels, forms of life and speech.

At this stage his intuitive consciousness, intellect and understanding are re-shaped and re-aligned.

(3) Saram Khand: (Plane of effort)

Mere knowledge is useless unless it is put into practice. The devotee now acts through volitional consciousness and develops contemplation and self-discipline. He learns to control ego and lives a mentally detached life while still living in the world.\footnote{106} At this stage the devotee starts appreciation of mysticism and detaches himself from too much involvement in gratification of his worldly desires. He appreciates the nature’s beauty and marvels at its mysteries. Thus practising he fashions his cognition, discernment, mind and intellect and becomes equal with men of occult powers.\footnote{107}
(4) Karam Khand:-(plane of grace)

The devotee is flooded with divine light and his soul starts comprehending the divine mysteries.\(^{108}\) Here he comes to know about spiritually advanced God’s doughty warriors (warring with five deadly sins) who have enshrined God in their hearts at all times.\(^{109}\) Only those reach this stage who have given a tough fight to their mind and defeated it.\(^{110}\) They are indebted to God for their spiritual attainment and do not consider that they themselves deserve any credit for it.\(^{111}\) Such spiritual giants live constantly in spiritual beatitude and are never subdued by mammon.\(^{112}\) They are the Bhagats whose reputation spreads throughout the universe. God’s praises adore their lips and their mind is always in a state of bliss.\(^{113}\) The fear of physical death and delusions no longer bother them. This mystical consciousness is a perennial source of joy for them. Such men can be called real Pandits.\(^{114}\)

(5) Sach Khand: - (Plane of Truth or spiritual realization).

The final stage of Mystical experiences is the Sach Khand.\(^{115}\) At this stage the devotee acquires many spiritual qualities. His mind is illuminated with divine knowledge and is detached from worldly attachments. Thus elevated, his mind constantly and effortlessly remains focussed on God and is perfectly disciplined.\(^{116}\) It is strictly under his command and is serenely pacified.
This is the highest stage of spiritual development and a state of bliss, beatitude, eternal peace and equipoise (तत्सत्याभास). It transcends time and space. The mystic’s ecstasy (मन्मत्य) leads to meditative spiritual absorption in God. He becomes a Braham Giani (spiritual elite) in spirit and action, enjoys bliss but cannot describe it. He automatically gains knowledge of the innumerable worlds in the universe. He acts in God’s Will (ज्ञान) and is ever prepared to die for a noble cause in the way of God. Like a current flowing through the wire, God’s creative energy starts flowing through the devotee and his word acquires a magical power. He himself is liberated and undertakes to liberate others from Mammon. All his efforts are now directed towards creating the “kingdom of God” on earth and to transform Manmukhs (Self-centred persons) into Gurmukhs (God-conscious persons). Well-being of all (समस्त जनसंघ) becomes his manifesto.

Religious principles only offer knowledge and are a food for thought. Intuitive knowledge comes only through persistent practice. We the Sikhs call our religion “Panth” which means “way” or “Route”. Anybody walking on a path must of necessity know his destination and the impediments of the way. He must also have the fortitude to keep walking and not to stop before reaching the destination. The higher a devotee rises in these Khands (spiritual planes) the more grace of God he enjoys.

The Sikh Gurus did not simply delineate the five stages as a set of ideas; they actually practised and lived through them. So what they preached was the realized ideal about whose impediments and short cuts they had personal experience.
4.5 Nirban (Salvation)

The term has been defined differently by different religions. In Hinduism salvation is considered to be a state that one reaches after death. Rituals, like bathing in the Ganges and other sacred rivers, are supposed to help in attaining salvation. For the Sikhs it means the spiritual merger of the human soul (Jivatma) with the Supreme soul (Parm Atma) as water merges with water or light blends with light. This state of merger is possible only through heightened spiritual contemplation when one attains the Sach Khand. The word of the Guru is the surest path to it. In this state the Sikh truly feels that his Guru is always with him. The mystical consciousness thus obtained is a perennial source of joy. Only very rare and completely purified devotees can reach this infinite perfection after conquering their attachment with worldly attractions. Sikhism advocates that such a status is to be achieved while physically alive. Sikhism does not accept the idea of achieving salvation after death.

4.6 Dasam Duar

Dasam Duar literally means “The tenth door”. It has been mentioned in Gurbani at many places. All living animals have five senses giving rise to nine orifices in the body (two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth and two front and back outlets) through which we perform various acts to keep the body going and to understand the world around us.

123 “Varanasi is a generous city. It offers instant Mukti (salvation), the best of its kind. For in Shiva’s city a dip in the Ganga gives you nirvana Mukti, you are saved forever”. (Statesman dated May 30, 1982).

Mr. Sham Lal Yadav (the then Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha) wrote, “Ganges water has been polluted to such an extent that it is not fit even for irrigation, let alone bathing.”(Tribune dated 6th June 1982). Gurmat says, नूहू तूहू तूहू तूहू स्नेहित स्नेहित त न मरी विचित्र (पंज 1292). “Liberation is not the isolation of the immortal spirit from the mortal human life, but is the transfiguration of the whole man.” (Dr. S. Radhakrishnan ex -president of India)

124 नूहू तूहू तूहू तूहू स्नेहित स्नेहित त न मरी विचित्र (पंज 1292)
These doors of perception roughly correspond to our five senses of sound, touch, shape, taste (enjoyment), and smell (sight, smell, touch, taste, hearing) etc. The human soul (which has become a slave to the mind) is tied up with the world and is too much engrossed in serving and satisfying the five senses. Kabir tells us that our soul wanders around aimlessly in these nine doors and remains oblivious to the tenth. The tenth door (sixth sense, spiritual eye) is invisible and more powerful orifice leading to enlightenment and salvation. According to Gurbani this mystical door is narrow (as small as one tenth of a mustard seed), closed tightly and is secret. Our mind is inflated with ego and is like an elephant that cannot walk through this narrow door. This door opens into the realm of God’s grace (spiritual thoughts) but only through following spiritual (or some say Yogic) practices. Anybody who succeeds in opening this tenth door is sure to achieve bliss. Opening of this door is referred to in Gurbani as achieving the spiritual eye or third eye.

The Dasam Durar has been variously called “Divine experience”, “religious experience”, or Mystic experience” in Gurbani. It is very difficult to visit and has been called Stone hard door (समस्त द्वार), which opens only through following the Guru’s instruction.
Sikhism aspires for this mystical stage and the Guru says that when one follows the Guru’s instructions and eventually reaches this highest stage of spiritual attainment, he meets God. This is where the devotee always remains attuned to the “Word” and hears the celestial music (Anhul Vadi) day and night.

Dasam Dur does not exist in the physical or material world. It is a mental state in which the devotee comprehends the expanse of the universe and the laws of nature governing everything. It is as if it were a window or a spiritual door to the wonders of the Almighty (Sach Khand), which opens through the harmonious union of the senses.

It was at this level of spiritual attainment that Truth was revealed to our Gurus as divine favour. They uttered their hymns in spiritual ecstasy in this ecstatic spiritual stage and their hymns therefore are a key to the Dasam Dur and through it to Sach Khand.

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134 dsvY duAwir kuMcI jb dIjY qau dieAwl ko drsnu kIjY ] (pMnw 341) AMimRq rsu siqgurU cuAwieAw ] dsvY
dUAwir pRgt hoie AwieAw (pMnw 1069)
135 Anhd Duin vwjih inq bwjy gweI si qgur bwxI (m:4 pMnw 442) AxmiVA w mMdlu bwjY, ibnu swvx Gnhru
136, bwdl ibnu brKw hoeI,jau  qqu ibcwrY koeI (pMnw 657). Usually it is understood that the primordial
sound is composed of the best five unstuck musical tunes and their vibration is still felt in all matter
whether animate or inanimate. pMc sbd Juxkwru inrwlmu pRiB Awpy
137 Yogi also believed this. “Music is a revelation; a revelation loftier than all wisdom and all philosophy.” (Beethoven)
138 gur kuMjI pwhU invlu mnu koTw qnu Ciq ]nwnk gur ibn mn kw qwk n auGVy Avr n kuMjI hQ (pMnw 1237)
Chapter Five
Shabad (Word)

The friction of two objects produces sound. When sound patterns are joined together in a particular way they give rise to meaningful words. God independently produced the primal sound when He assumed a manifested form from His un-manifested state. The mystical celestial sound produced by God in this process is usually compared with the bursting of a fruit and is described as WORD.

Most religions of the world believe that everything in the Universe came out of this uncreated word of God. Almost all of them call the “Word” omnipresent invisible wave, which is infinite and is the source of emancipation. The intuitive effect of the Shabad (Word) is a very sweet musical sound. According to Sikhism the whole universe came out of this one Word, which is present in the universe in sound, light, and motion in changing and changeable forms of energy.


138 Such sound is called Awhq (Frictional). Another sound is continuous, limitless and is not produced by friction. Mystics call it Anwhq (Anwhd). It was produced by God and is the basis of creation.

139 Scientists call it “Big Bang” it produced light, sound and heat energy (which is necessary for life).

140 Most religions of the world believe that everything in the Universe came out of this uncreated word of God. (SbdwbRhm)

141 Shamas Tabrez says, “Awlm Az sOq zhUr igRPq, Az hzUrS bswiq nUr igRPq” (The universe came into existence from Word (sOq) and all light originated from it). “Understand the primordial ‘Word’, forgetting all books. Illumine yourself within. How many books will you read?” (Hazrat Sai Qutab Ali Shah).
Sometimes in the Holy Quran it is also mentioned as 'Word' (For example Quran 6:7) or Haq (Truth) as in Quran 36:82.  

The Hindu Rishis called it ‘Nad’, ‘Vak (or Vach)’, ‘Akashbani’ (आकाशबनी), ‘Dibh-dhuni’ (दिख धुनी), and ‘Dev Dhun’. (देव धुन), or दिखवी. It is a common belief among the Hindus that the sound of the word of God was Om (ॐ).  

The Greeks called the “Word” Logos, Nous or Noumenon and defined it by saying that ‘Logos’ is one and only, it pervades the universe and is unchangeable. It is God’s law, God’s Will and God Himself.  

The Christians and the Jews call it ‘Memra’. It appears to have been derived from Armenian word ‘Amer’ which means ‘Word’ (ամեր, ամեր). The Jews define it as God’s Word or ‘God’s Hukam (हुकम) and consider it as God’s invisible fiat, by which creation came into existence.  

In the Chinese Scripture ‘Tau’ has been eulogised a lot. ‘Tau’ is defined as eternal Word, Truth, rationality, repository of spiritual knowledge, mystical element, or a principle giving motion to mind and matter. The Chinese say that ‘Tau’ is the basis of the creation of the universe and everything exists in ‘Tau’.  

The Parsees call it “Sarosha”. It is said to have existed before earth, vegetation and fire came into being. It is God’s (Ahuramazda’s) Will that creates the world, sustains it and destroys it. It is piety, religion and reality all in one.  

142 Maulana Roomi called it Naam (नाम). Muslims believe that God said, “Kun Fayukun (कुन फयुकुन). He said, ‘Be’ and everything came into existence. बी भनदो देख वचन (भणदी)  

143 “Word is truly God. Word is the highest truth.” (Kath Upnishad XV 24) Word is ध्वनि or eternal God (सार है प्रेमित शाने क्रम २४). The word is OM. “प्राग ध्वनि नाइ देख प्राग ध्वनि नाइ देख” (Mandukya Upnishad-Gaudapad’s 25th Karika) “The mind must be unified with OM because OM is Braham, the fearless. He who is unified with OM knows no fear. Hindus prefix this word with many Mantras. “निरुक्ष अभिषक्षित (निरुक्ष) अथात् न निरुक्षक अवस्था राधिका गूढ़ दिन न निरुक्ष अवस्था राधिका गूढ़ दिन न” (लीला VIII.13)  

144 Your “Word” has been true from the beginning and your Will is unquestionable (Psalms 1.11) “In the beginning was the “Word” and the “Word” was God. (John 1.12) भि अभि बनी भिरुक्षी अभिनियत महिम प्रमूरि (भा ६२)
Guru Nanak Dev named it *Sat Naam* (*satnam*), which is synonymous with ‘Word’. Guru Arjan Dev said that the main aim of every religion is to attune with *Naam* (*naam*). “In Guru Nanak’s house we deal in Naam.”

Guru Granth Sahib tells us “All attributes of the Universe can be described through the 52 letters (of Sanskrit alphabet) but the attributes of divine “Word” cannot be explained through any letter or word of the alphabet.”

Our five senses provide us knowledge of sound, touch, sight, taste and smell. Shabad (sound of the primal Word) is served by two senses that of hearing and seeing (when the Word is written). The real knowledge and therefore enjoyment of the Shabad (sound) lies only in hearing. Written Shabad is an imitation of the real. The ‘Word’ (Shabad) in Gurbani is used interchangeably for both hearing and reading. The written word only helps us in understanding a part of the reality and is not a substitute for the real ‘Word’. However with practice it leads us to the real ‘Word’.

This divine ‘Word’ is within us all but most of the time we are disconnected from it. The question for the God men has been how to understand the “Word” that created the universe and promulgated God’s law. In order to make it intelligible to ordinary human beings, the religious preceptors (*Gurus, Sants or Murshids*) devote their psychic energies and get in tune with it. They then try to explain the God’s Word in their own language, which ordinary people can understand. Having done so they leave their findings in the Scripture. According to Sikhism the devotee succeeds in attuning to *Naam* through Gurbani (Shabad) and thus reaches his destination (the primordial Word).

Gurbani is *Naam* in essence.
The Word cleanses the mind and the body and in the clean mind God enters to sanctify it.” 149 “Without the Word (knowledge) humans are like blind people fumbling in darkness” 150

Human soul is subtle. It is not something physical. The source of an abstract subtle thing must also be subtle. ‘Word’ is subtle and is the nearest thing to God. In Gurbani the phraseology used by Bhattas to describe Guru Nanak is equally subtle and mystical. For example they describe him not merely as a human being but as a “Carrier of the light” (निष्ठा मुक्द) or carrier of energy (रक्ष घुम). Here the light or energy means the spiritual wisdom or power of the Word. Guru Nanak was Guru only as long as he was the disseminator of the mystical ‘Word’.

5.1 Shabad Guru?

A question is sometimes raised about the potentiality of Shabad to guide the human beings. In other words it is said that only a living human being can be a Guru. It should be understood that the key issue is self-examination (The Psychologists call it introspection), 151 which is possible only through knowledge. The Guru is the source of Shabad or spiritual knowledge. 152 The physical body of the Guru is necessary only as long as it imparts knowledge, which the Guru communicates through ‘Word’ (Shabad). The Guru says, “The word is the Guru and the Guru is the word.” 153 A silent Guru or a statue cannot do this. Therefore in the real sense the Word (Shabad) is the Guru. 154 It is God’s message mystically inscribed in the creation. We have noted this in the previous chapters that ‘Word’ created everything in the universe and made life possible.
Only the Guru’s ‘Word’, through concentration, can wash our sins and lead us to the universal primal ‘Word’.\textsuperscript{155} It is in this sense that the Guru claims that his word contains the essence of the Primal ‘Word’, which was uttered by God.\textsuperscript{156}

For the Sikhs the ‘Word’ is available in the Holy Guru Granth Sahib and therefore they need no other human Guru for spiritual instruction. Guru Arjan Dev himself pointed out that the Holy Granth is the “Throne of the Almighty and a compendium of complete instruction.”\textsuperscript{157} It need not be mentioned that the real thing is the ‘Word’ and not the paper, ink, or the cloth covering the Holy Granth. This point is clarified by saying \textit{पूर्व से सब सुधर सन्त के स्वरुप यह गुरुः (God dwells on the tongue of the Saint)} where the tongue is not a dwelling house but the carrier of the ‘Word’.

Concerning the Shabad, the Guru has also used the word ‘Sewa’. “The sewa of the Guru is to understand his word.”\textsuperscript{158} Therefore in the final analysis the “Word” itself is not as important as the message it conveys. One who has fully imbibed the message of the ‘Word’ reaches his spiritual home loaded with truth and honour. “The Guru’s instruction is a treasury of pearls and diamonds if only the devotee searches for them.” Further the Guru says, “The Guru’s instruction is like the company of a spiritually enlightened person.”\textsuperscript{159}

5.2 Guru

Literally, the word Guru means ‘a teacher’, ‘a guide’ or ‘an instructor’. In the context of religion, Guru is personified as “a preceptor who dispels darkness and floods the soul with spiritual knowledge”\textsuperscript{160}.

\textsuperscript{155} \textit{सुरी वाचन न उक्त न है सवध न ही चाहे (पृष्ठ २५६) परन्तु वे नहीं वै एक योगकाल (पृष्ठ १६२) मय्या पूर्व से सुधर सन्त के स्वरुप (पृष्ठ १६३)} \textsuperscript{156} \textit{एक नाम सुधर विनिमय नहीं नहीं नहीं नहीं (पृष्ठ २०४) १) यत्वप्रथम नाम सबूत नहीं संगत यथा नाम सबूत नाम सबूत (पृष्ठ २०४) २) नाम सहित नाम संयोजन नाम संयोजन नाम संयोजन (पृष्ठ २०४)} \textsuperscript{157} \textit{धर्मी विभेदन के स्वरुप (पृष्ठ २२३) २) गुरु के मेला सवध के स्वरुप (पृष्ठ २२३) १) गुरु की नाम नाम संयोजन (पृष्ठ २२३) २) गुरु की मेला सवध के स्वरुप (पृष्ठ २२३)} \textsuperscript{158} \textit{गुरू ही मेला मेला है (पृष्ठ २२३) २) पाँच दी मेला मेला की मेला मेला मेला मेला (पृष्ठ २२३)} \textsuperscript{159} \textit{१) नाम संपत्ति सबूत एक जो नेता नेता नेता (पृष्ठ २२३) २) बुध तत्प्रेमिक मय्या नाम संयोजन संयोजन संयोजन मात्र (पृष्ठ २२३)} \textsuperscript{160} \textit{यूर्व विश्वास पूर्व द्वैत स्वरुप गुरुः (Guru means a guide that swallows the darkness of mis-knowledge) (पृष्ठ २२३) उदाहरण के स्वरुप (पृष्ठ २२३) २) नाम संपत्ति सबूत एक जो नेता (पृष्ठ २२३) २) बुध तत्प्रेमिक मय्या नाम संयोजन संयोजन संयोजन मात्र (पृष्ठ २२३)
It is in this later sense that this word has been extensively used in Gurbani. The Gurus (sometimes called Murshids, Satgurus or Sants) are rare specimens of humanity. Almost all religions agree that a True Guru is overwhelmed with the supreme presence of the Lord and is internally attuned to the voice of God.\textsuperscript{161} He is therefore personified human God equivalent and is divinely authorised to transmit and instil word-sound of God (spiritual ecstasy) into the human heart.\textsuperscript{162} A Guru can be said to have two centres of consciousness, one human and one divine, He may speak to the world from human consciousness but reveal divine secrets.\textsuperscript{163}

The word Guru has been used in Sikhism to refer to (1) the ten Sikh Gurus (2) The blessed Shabad of the Guru called Gurbani and (3) God.\textsuperscript{164} No other object or person can take the place of a “Guru” for the Sikhs.

As a communicator of God’s commands the Guru offers instructions through Shabad (word), which contains the essence of Naam. Its effects are corporate as well as individual. Concentration on the Guru’s word leads the novitiate to Vismad (wonderment- ecstasy) and appreciation of God’s bounties. Vismad acts as a stimulus to regular and exalted meditation bringing in immense joy, tranquillity, serenity, and peace. Once this happens the path is clear. The human soul begins to ascend higher and higher spiritual levels of understanding and ultimately reaches its destination.

In Sikhism a human Guru is as much respected as God\textsuperscript{165} but is not considered God or a plenipotentiary of God. Again the Guru is not the physical human body but the “word” of the Guru. According to Sikhism a human Guru does not run away from the tempestuous maelstrom of life but lives as a part of it. He opposes renunciation, celibacy, extreme austerity, and penance and like all other human beings discharges the obligations of a married life.

He does not act like a magician showing miracles to attract followers and neither does he arrogate to himself the sole agency of reserving seats for

\textsuperscript{161} तत्त्वज्ञ तत्त्वकृत्तु है तत्त्वसंसार तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु (पृष्ठ 1442)। तत्त्वसंसार में भवि मृत्तक व तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु (पृष्ठ 144)

\textsuperscript{162} तत्त्व तत्त्व तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु (पृष्ठ 702)। तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु (पृष्ठ 942)

\textsuperscript{163} तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु (पृष्ठ 66)

\textsuperscript{164} तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु (पृष्ठ 598)

\textsuperscript{165} तत्त्वज्ञ तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु तत्त्वकृत्तु (पृष्ठ 497) । “Totally peaceful, blissful and without human weaknesses. Impartial and completely detached.”.
his followers in heaven. He considers principles superior to personality and is ever prepared to lay down his life to defend the principles. These doctrines are unique to Sikhism and sharply distinguish Sikh Gurus from other world teachers of religion who claimed exclusive rights to divinity, incarnation (अवतार) or revelation (रविवीर).  

5.3 Need of a Guru

A question is usually asked, “Why can’t we achieve high spiritual status without a Guru?”

It is a fact of life that we love only those things that we see or about which we obtain knowledge through our five senses. Again out of these we love those things most, which are close to us for example our parents, children, relatives, friends etc. Since God is without shape, colour, or other visible identity, we do not automatically develop love for Him.

There is a soul within us, which is a spark of the divine but the mechanism to take us to the secret treasure of the soul (तीन भक्ति) is not known to us. The Guru delineates the route and takes us to the journey’s end by guiding us step by step. About this route Maulana Roomi says, “My friend the route to God is narrow. No body can walk on it without the assistance of a Guide (आचार्य)”. Just as we cannot obtain heat without a source of heat, we cannot enshrine Godly love in our hearts unless we associate with a Guru who has become a source of such love. The Guru knows the way fully well and guides the novitiate with spiritual light. Searching for God without a Guru is like searching for the wake of a fish in water.
It should be clear that the “Word” (Shabad, Naam), the Sound (Naad) and the God’s law (Hukam) are all abstract terms. Abstractions are always difficult to understand. The work becomes easier with the help of somebody who has the experience in the field. A Guru has already travelled on the road to spirituality and therefore his guidance is like eyes to the blind. Sikhism considers the Guru as a bridge between the devotee and God. Gurbani says that we should not be fooled by the outward human appearance of the Guru. He is like a wave in an ocean, which is separate from the ocean and is yet a part of it. God showers His benedictions on the Gurus and they voluntarily assume the duty to guide others on the path to God's door. “It is not difficult to find a Guru to help in worldly affairs but spiritual guides are rare.”

Different people have described the Guru or Murshid through different allegories. Some say the Guru is like a stonemason who carves the stone and leaves it in the form of a beautiful statue. Others compare him with soap that washes the cloth clean. The Guru cleans the devotee’s mind and instils “Naam” in it. Yet others say that like a Chandan tree, the Guru spreads the fragrance of “Naam” among all who happen to be near him. The Guru is thus a human incarnation of the Spirit, a mystical voice of Akal Purkh. He is the messenger and the message in one. Once we understand the message we become one with the messenger. Since the messenger lives in the love of God, he directs the novitiate towards the Divine love by penetrating with exceptional versatility into the domain of the follower’s private and spiritual experiences. In a word we can say that the Guru’s divine aim is transfiguration of the novitiate through direction consciousness.

In Gurbani the Guru is compared to a gardener watering the dying plant, which becomes verdant after the gardener's care. He lends growth and life to the dying. He waters it with his ambrosial glance. Guru Arjan Dev compares an ordinary individual with a wayfarer who has lost his way.
The Guru guides him on the right path and the traveller reaches his destination. It is by good luck that one meets a True Guru guide who directs one to the right path.

Guru Angad Dev says, “Humans are imprisoned in the house (human body) locked from outside by mammon. This lock can be opened only with the help of the True Guru.” He opens the inner door of our mind and leaves us in the presence of the Lord. Bhai Nand Lal says, “If you wish to see God then find a perfect Guru. The perfect Guru is the embodiment of God whose closeness beatifies the soul and lends peace to the mind.” Although the Guru lives in the world like other human beings, he keeps afloat of worldly entanglements and is not influenced by power or pelf, honour or dishonour. He is always imbued with God’s name and remains unruffled by criticism or malice. Shamas Tabrez has called the Guru’s hand as God’s hand and his eye as “God’s eye.”

The Guru is like God in human form (Sargun), constantly in communication with God, and is divinely authorised to transmit and instil voice of God into the human heart. His Shabad (Naam) is the instrument of the Guru. It acts like a ship that ferries the passengers (seekers of truth) across the tempestuous Sea. The Guru starts the process by diverting the mind of the novitiate from the world. He plants the “Shabad” in the devotee’s mind and once the devotee imbibes it the Guru’s presence never leaves him.
He purifies him from misdeeds, and materialistic attractions through his own example. The devotee dies to the world and is re-born in spirit. Thus liberated the mind becomes fit to follow the path to glory delineated by the Guru.

Spiritual knowledge, also known as celestial light (ਸੁਰੀ, ਸੁਰੀ)189, is transferred by the Guru to his fully attuned follower like an electric current flowing from high voltage into a low voltage receptor. Once the two come at the same voltage the giver (Guru) and recipient (follower) become spiritually one and there remains no spiritual difference between them. Bhai Gurdas explains this process by citing the example of a lamp lighting another lamp. Elsewhere he gives the example of a Chandan tree, which imparts its qualities to another tree growing close by. The Guru helps only those who have taken the route suggested by him and have faithfully followed it. The pleasure of the Guru is therefore necessary because there is no secret between God and the Guru.

Bhai Nand Lal was of the opinion that one should keep away from those who have no Guru because only the true Guru can guide the novitiate on the right path.

186 "I died in the Shabad, and through the Shabad, I am dead while yet alive. O siblings of destiny, through the Shabad, I have been liberated." Sorath M.3 Ghar 1 Page 601
187 "I am dead while yet alive. O siblings of destiny, through the Shabad, I have been liberated." Sorath M.3 Ghar 1 Page 601
188 "The spiritual light of one merged into the other and the Guru himself anointed the follower. ..." Nanak and Angad are one and similarly Amar Das is raised high by Angad Dev.
189 "When completely reformed, then Lehna was anointed." (When completely reformed, then Lehna was anointed)
190 "The spiritual light of one merged into the other and the Guru himself anointed the follower. ..." (When completely reformed, then Lehna was anointed)
Chapter Six
Guru Nanak’s Guru

In Sikhism a Guru is given a very prominent place and it is believed that even if we receive all the knowledge of every field in the Universe, we will still be in the dark without the spiritual guidance of the Guru.194 Wasisht trained the Hindu prophet Ram Chandra. Sandeepan Rishi and Angra Rishi trained Krishna. Christ is reported by some people to have obtained instruction from the Buddhists. But when we talk of Guru Nanak, we find various people mentioning various names as Guru Nanak’s preceptors.

Some Muslim historians are openly prejudicial and have ulterior motives. They weave fantastic stories and pass ridiculous invectives against the Gurus in some of their books. For example Hussein Bakhsh writes that Guru Gobind Singh had accepted Islam but gives no positive proof.

Some Western writers too base their findings on guesswork. Their interest in Sikhism arose only after the conquest of the Panjab in the later half of the 19th century. Most of them looked upon Sikhism and other Indian religions through the eyes of the Christian missionaries and therefore did their best not only to deliberately corrupt the Indian religions but also to set one Indian religion against another.195 An extreme example is found in Mr. F. Pincott’s “A Dictionary of Islam” (1885 AD) in which he tried to prove that Guru Nanak based his religion on Yousuf wa Zulaikha, a romantic and lecherous story written by Jami.196

So far the following have been mentioned as the Gurus of Guru Nanak.

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194 This was the time when books like “Rangila Rasool” (attacking prophet Muhammad), “Satyarah Parkash” (attacking Guru Nanak) and “Dambh Nivaran” (written by Giani Dit Singh in defence of Sikhism) suddenly began to appear. Killings, arson, riots and abductions were the result.

195 He writes, “It is hardly possible to find a more complete correspondence of ideas than that furnished by the following series from Yousuf wa Zulaikha of Jami, the Persian Sufi and the others. Here he gives some examples.
We will examine these claims here briefly.

6.1 Sayyad Hussain

Maulvi Ghulam Muhammad the author of “Siar-ul-Mutakhrin” (i-110) writes that Sayyad Hussain was the Guru of Guru Nanak.\(^{197}\) Similarly Puratan Janam Sakhi says Kutb-ud-din was the Guru of Guru Nanak. No other source confirms these statements.

This misunderstanding about Sayyad Hussain (or Kutb-ud-din?) appears to have arisen from the fact that Guru Nanak learnt Persian and Arabic languages from Muslim schoolteachers. (See Janam Sakhi Bhai Bala Sakhi No. 3 page 6). The same is confirmed in the Janam Sakhi of Bhai Mani Singh (part 1 Sakhi No. 6 page 15).

The word Guru is still being used in Asian languages for the schoolteacher. In this connection Cunningham writes, “In his youth Guru Nanak made himself familiar with the popular creeds both of the Mohammedans and Hindus and that he gained a general knowledge of the Quran. There is no evidence however to confirm that Guru Nanak accepted any particular religious creed beyond learning the art of education and religion.”

6.2 Zinda Peer

John Malcolm (sketch p.14) writes, “Nanuk is reported by the Mahometans, to have learnt all worldly sciences from Khizzer i.e the prophet Elias.” In one of the Janam Sakhi\(^{198}\) a part of the story reads,

\(^{197}\) It should be noted that Ghulam Hussain has committed many blunders. For example he writes that Guru Granth Sahib was written and prepared by Guru Nanak in the time of Babar.He writes, “His collection becoming numerous, it took the form of a book, which was entitled Grant, and became so famous in the times of Sultan Babar, as to give celebrity to its author, who from the day was followed by multitudes of spectators or well-wishers.”

\(^{198}\) Presumably written by the Hindalis (a breakaway sect of the Sikhs) who extolled Hindal as a greater Guru than Guru Nanak and intentionally tried to corrupt the Sikh History and scripture. They had coined spurious hymns in the name of Guru Nanak. No contemporary or semi-contemporary source mentions Zinda Peer as the Guru of Guru Nanak.
“Then Mardana asked him what is the name of the Guru who imparted religious instruction to you? The Guru replied that he is usually known as Baba Zinda”.

Immediately after these lines the story outlines the attributes of Baba Zinda (living prophet) as supposedly given by Guru Nanak. It reads, “The whole creation is dependent on Him. Even air, water and fire obey Zinda’s commands.” Obviously such an entity cannot be human.

It should also be noted that different people have described Zinda peer differently. The well-known Indian Philosopher Dr. Pitamber Das Barthwall writes, “Zinda Peer means an enlightened person and in spiritual terms only God is called Zinda Peer.” Kabir in his ‘Kabir Granthawali’ also confirms this meaning of Zind and writes; “Kabir says my Lord, the life of the world (Zind), is contactable in the fourth spiritual stage.” The well-known Hindi writer Bihari Darya uses the same word in exactly the same sense (See ‘Sant Bani’ part 1 page 123). Here again Zinda is the master of Trees and the living beings whom the Vedas and the learned people have not been able to find. They only imagine that he exists. Mufti Ghulam Sarwar in his book, “Tarikh-e-Makhzan-e-Panjab”(P. 28-29) writes that Sheikh Sadar-ud-Din Shervani (the founder of Maler Kotla) was known as Zinda Peer.

It must however be admitted that a shrine called Sunder Mandir exists in Sindh (Pakistan). The Hindus dedicate it to Odero Lal and the Muslims call it the mausoleum of Zinda Peer (Khawaja Khizar). The origins of this shrine are steeped in antiquity and nothing much is known about its history.

In his Bansavlinama (14/237) Kesar Singh Chhibar writes, “The ruler named Burn was known as Zinda peer.”

The encyclopaedia of Islam (Vol 2, P.865) explains that Khawaja Khizar is “a mythical personality looked upon as the angel of water”. Dr. Trumpp writes, “In Sindh and the lower Panjab Khavajah Khidar is worshipped also by the Hindus as the river God Indus under more common name

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199 ‘I want to know that you, who have received instruction from a Guru, what is the name of your Guru? He replied: “My Guru is Baba Zinda”.

200 “Kabir says my Lord, the life of the world (Zind), is contactable in the fourth spiritual stage.”

201 “Bihari Darya uses the same word in exactly the same sense (See ‘Sant Bani’ part 1 page 123).

202 In his Bansavlinama (14/237) Kesar Singh Chhibar writes, “The ruler named Burn was known as Zinda peer.”

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Zinda Peer"

In the earliest Janam Sakhi known as the Puratan janam Sakhi we find that Khawaja Khizar when talking about Guru Nanak says to Saido and Seeho, “O saints I am only water and he is a Guru. I have come out of him many times and have similarly gone back into him many times”. 204

It is interesting to note that while listing the names of the followers of Guru Nanak the veteran Sikh writer Bhai Gurdas lists Zind Peer among the followers of Guru Nanak. 205

6.3 Bhagat Kabir

Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (V.vii P.632) listed Kabir as the Guru of Guru Nanak and most Western scholars followed suit. For example Gordon (Encyclopaedia of Religion and ethics P.287) writes, “All that was best and most tolerant in his (Rama Nand’s) system was then taken up by Kabir in the Punjab in the sixteenth century and his great disciple Nanak.” Gordon’s knowledge is very shallow. Kabir never entered the Punjab throughout his life and neither did he live in the sixteenth century. Another Western writer J.N. Farquhar is his book “Modern Religious movements in India” (P.336) writes, “Nanak, the founder of the Sikh sect was a disciple of the famous teacher Kabir”. The same author had earlier written, “An outline of Religious literature in India” in 1920 in which he had expressed a doubt as to the two men having ever met each other. Yet another protagonist of the same idea is Mr. F.E.Keay who called Kabir the Guru of Guru Nanak in his book “Kabir and His followers.”

Some writers have even gone to the extent of saying that Guru Nanak himself acknowledged Kabir as his Guru. For example E.W Hopkins in his book “Religions of India” writes that Guru Nanak was a nominal founder of the Sikhs “a body, as Nanak claimed, was embodying the religion of Kabir himself, of whom he claimed to be a follower”. (Page 511)

204 "ey swihb ky lok mYN pwnI hoN AqY auh (gurU nwnk) gurU hY [mYN keI vwr aus qy aupijAw hW ar keI vwr aus mYN smwie igAw hW]

205 "daulq KW loDI Blw hoAw izMd pIr AibnwSI" (vwr 11 pauVI 13)
Elphinston and Hunter copied the same and Raja Siva Parsad in his “History of Hindustan” (part I chapter xiii) made use of this myth. None of them quoted any lines from Guru Nanak’s writings to prove their point. 206

If Kabir were the spiritual preceptor of Guru Nanak, then Guru Nanak would have mentioned his name with great reverence. The fact however is that Guru Nanak has not mentioned Kabir even once in his writings. This is against Gurbani’s dictat, which says, “O pious men it is not proper to conceal the name of the Guru. Those who do so lose all spiritual merit” “Those who do not affirm their Guru shall have no home or place of rest. They lose both this world and the next; they have no place in the Court of the Lord”. 207

Different writers have given different dates of Kabir’s birth which all fall in the period 1398-1448 AD. 208 Only Mr. Burns (in encyclopaedia of Religion and ethics page 632), without mentioning the source of his information, writes that Kabir lived from 1440 AD to 1518 AD. Encyclopaedia Britannica simply states that Kabir lived in the 15th century (Vol.13 p.235) In the most authentic and popular Hindi treatise we find Kabir’s date of death recorded as follows: “He died in Samat 1505 at Maghar”209 which corresponds to 1448 AD. According to archaeological survey of India Nawab Bijli Khan erected Kabir’s mausoleum two years after his death and wrote his year of death on it, which was 1448 AD. Later Nawab Fidai Khan had the mausoleum repaired in 1667 AD but retained the date of birth which can still be seen there. Guru Nanak was born in 1469 AD 21 years after Kabir’s death. Neither any later Sikh Guru nor any follower of Kabir has anywhere mentioned that Kabir was the Guru of Guru Nanak or that they had met each other.

206 In this game even Kabir Panthis joined in. They violated the Janam Sakhis because Guru Nanak’s fame was clouding that of Kabir. Hindalis too introduced unsubstantiated stories in the Janam Sakhis and according to Nanak Parkash and Giani Gian Singh tore up and destroyed the original Janam Sakhis.

207 भी कुछ शायद अपना न आया यही वंदना दिखा मानना भूल गया मकरणा (पं 204) OR निजीत तुम प्रेमिक अपना वृद्धि किया न होगी न होगी। वहां मानना जय जय हरिया जय जय (पं 95), मिन कुछ तो औपन्यास आपना है का सुकृतितर उठा सोई उठा उठा उठा उठा उठा उठा (पं 63)

208 According to Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha Kabir was born in 1398 AD (Mahan Kosh P.298)

209 “मा मान न भाग ते भी भाग ते महान वर्ण बना” (“निंदो अवयन मे निंदो अवयन” पं 59) Exactly the same date is recorded in “कविता अनुलूक सी नंद वचका” (पं 142).
It is significant to note that while mentioning the name of Kabir, the Sikh Gurus have shown no special respect other than that accorded to all other Bhagats. The third Guru Amar Das was only 10 years younger than Guru Nanak, he must have known and mentioned Kabir if Kabir had the slightest connection with Guru Nanak. Even Guru Angad (the second Guru) has not mentioned Kabir. Guru Arjan Dev, the compiler of Guru Granth Sahib, mentions the name of Kabir only as a Bhagat (Sant) but glorifies Guru Nanak as “the embodiment of God.” The situation would have been the reverse if Kabir were the Guru and Nanak his follower.

In his magnum opus the Vars, Bhai Gurdas has mentioned Kabir three times only as a Bhagat (saint) and has shown no connection between Guru Nanak and Kabir. Baba Buddha lived a long time after Guru Nanak and yet did not ask Bhai Gurdas to show reverence to Guru Nanak’s presumed Guru.

Kabir is mistakenly suggested by some as Guru of Guru Nanak because of some similarities in their diction, imagery and train of thought in Bani, and rejection of caste system, idolatory and formalism by both. In this attempt it is completely ignored that Kabir accepted Vedic authority where as Guru Nanak did not. While addressing the Brahmans Kabir’s language becomes a bit harsh and vitriolic whereas the Guru is restrained and scholarly. One is irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that the two had not much in common. Many others also share the apparently common points between Kabir and Guru Nanak. For example Buddhism, Christianity and Islam did not observe caste and Gorakh and Ramanand both criticised Brahmanical over lordship. It is also worth noting that Kabir did not take any interest in the temporal affairs of his time like Guru Nanak nor did he preach his gospel throughout the length and breadth of India as did Guru Nanak.

210 “कबीर नारायण की रचनाओं में गुरु नानक के नाम संदर्भ में सोचने वालों के नाम से अलग की उनका योग्य प्रतिनिधि कबीर ही गुरु नानक के उपर अपने नाम दिखाता रहता है।” (मंदिर दों बने 1192)
“लोग कबीर ने गुरु नानक रूप में कुछ अलग-अलग संदर्भों में उनके चिन्ता के प्रति आश्वासन अर्पित करते हैं।” (मंदिर दों बने 1192)
“कबीर ने राम और कृष्ण के नाम पर अपनी भक्ति को अपने भक्ति के समीप समाप्त करने की प्रयास की है।” (मंदिर दों बने 1192)
“मध्य प्रदेश के इस्लामी कलाकारों ने इस्लाम के दर्शन के साथ सम्बन्ध के लिए कबीर की प्रति ध्यान दिया है।” (मंदिर दों बने 1192)
211 “In one respect Nanak surpassed Kabir and every other reformer who continued to pay homage to Rama and Krishna as divine beings whereas Nanak boldly questioned their divinity.” (Dr. Gokal Chand Narang)
212 ते हूँ कुरुक्षेत्र कुरुक्षेत्री लिखिता। उही निःशासन ग्रहणेत गुरु मूले बायक (गुरु अर्जन द्वारा 1194)
6.4 Ramanand / Sant Rein

Recently, some writers have made ridiculous assertions by calling Ramanand as the Guru of Guru Nanak. Ramanand (Kabir’s Guru) lived much earlier. Some others try to prove that Sant Rein was Guru Nanak’s Guru. Sant Rein lived nearly 180 years after Guru Nanak.213 Picking out a few similarities between Sikhism and Christianity, some western writers have gone to the extent of claiming that Guru Nanak based Sikhism on Christianity.214 Such claims are outrightly ridiculous and have no basis at all.

It is not only the non-Sikh writers that make mistakes; sometimes, Sikh writers have committed similar blunders. For example resenting the misinterpretations of Guru Nanak’s writings, Nihal Singh Suri (in his book “Jiwan birtant Sri Kabir ji-Lahore 1917) writes that Ravidas, Ramanand, Pipa, and Kabir were all followers of Guru Nanak. The author of Mehma Parkash writes that Gorakh (who lived in the 8th century) came to meet Guru Nanak (15th century).

6.5 Conclusion

The question of Guru Nanak’s guruship is answered by Bhai Gurdas as follows:

“The Baba first identified the source of grace and later toiled hard to achieve it. He attained topmost spiritual height and began showering humility and spiritualism everywhere.”215

In his treatise “Living religions and modern thought” Mr. Widgery writes, “Nanak probably gained from his undisturbed communings with nature, his own soul and his Creator”(Page 97). Rabindra Nath Tagore wrote, “The truth which filled his mind was not a thing which he borrowed from

213 Some writers have written that Sant Rein was the leader of the group of Sants whom Guru Nanak had fed at Chuhar Kana and that he was the Guru of Guru Nanak. They quote, तंत्र तेंट नृत्रा जय

214 Read “Sikh Religion and Christianity” by G.S.Sidhu

215 “पिठवे धन्वन्तरिक जन्म संकल्पक स्वरूप विजय श्री राम जी जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय जय

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books or received from teachers; he did not come to it by following a
prescribed path of tradition, but it came to him as an illumination of his
entire life, almost like a communication of his universal self to his
personal self.”

The best source of information on this issue is Guru Nanak himself. He
writes, “The essence, the immaculate Lord, the Light of all has imbedded
His light in me. There remains no secret between us. The Infinite
Transcendent Lord, the Supreme Lord God has met Nanak as the Guru.

The Siddhas directly asked Guru Nanak) “Whose follower are you and
who is your Guru”? The Guru replied, ‘Primal Word’ is my Guru and my
concentration on ‘word’ (Shabad) has been my guide.

If Guru Nanak had any Human Guru, he would surely have named him in
response to this direct question.

Ms Dorothy Field writes, “In India it has at all times been the custom for
young men to be apprenticed to a Guru as religious guide. Every great
saint had his Guru. But Nanak held that the religious world had gone
astray and that therefore a new and direct revelation was again
necessary. He therefore declared that his own Guru was God who had
specially instructed him how to lead back the world to the right path.”

216 | 217
Chapter Seven
Is Granth Sahib a Guru?

McLeod and some other Christian Missionaries have raised the issue that Guru Granth Sahib was at no stage invested with Guruship. In his book, “The Evolution of Sikh Community”, McLeod remarked that, “There is the question of authority within the evolving Khalsa. Tradition attributes a definitive answer to Guru Gobind Singh, one which conferred his personal authority upon the sacred scripture and the corporate Panth. This may perhaps be a retrospective interpretation, a tradition which owes its origin not to an actual pronouncement of the Guru but to an instant need for maintaining the Panth’s cohesion during a late period.” The Sikhs, however, believe that before his death at Nander on October 7, 1708 Guru Gobind Singh ended the personal Guruship and instructed his followers to consider the Granth Sahib as their spiritual Guru. He also said that all temporal matters needing direction should be referred to an assembly of five baptised Sikhs. This was the wisest decision of the Guru and was in accordance with the principles enunciated by Guru Nanak. Right from the beginning of the Sikh movement the “Word” was considered as the spiritual Guru. Sooner or later the “Word” had to be established as such. Guru Gobind Singh therefore made the word-Guru everlasting by declaring it as the spiritual representative of the ten Sikh Gurus thereby lending it the authority of the ten spiritual preceptors.

218 Pashaura Singh, Piar Singh and Harjot Oberoi also support this view.
219 This is because spiritual reality is more important than sensually perceived empirical reality. It is believed that Ahmad Shah Abdali had carried away the original copy of the Granth during a battle fought with the Sikhs near village Kothala. However some scholars believe that the original Granth is still available in the seminary of Sant Rein Udasi in village Kothala (District Maler Kotla).
220 Usually when a great man or a Guru dies, there crops up a struggle between his disciples to occupy his place. Bestowal of Guruship on the ‘Word’ was therefore a very wise step to avoid conflict. If the Guru had not done so the Nirmlay, Udasi, Bedi, Nirankari, Sodhi, Bhallay and Trehan etc would have caused wars of succession like Prithi Chand, Ram Rai and Sheehan.
7.1 The proofs

Unfortunately there were no trained historians among the Guru’s followers to record all that happened at the time of his death. It is also true that the Guru himself has not left any written evidence to that end (or perhaps he did not want to) but there are numerous written proofs left by his contemporaries or near contemporaries to authenticate the bestowal of Guruship on the Holy Granth. Narbad Bhatt, a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh, wrote in his diary that just before the Guru’s death, the Guru asked Bhai Dya Singh to fetch the Holy Granth. With reverence the Guru appointed the Granth as the next and the final Guru of the Sikhs.221

Bhai Prahlad Singh was the childhood companion of Guru Gobind Singh. In his Rehat Nama he writes, “All Sikhs were ordered to consider the Granth as their Guru”.222 Bhai Nand Lal, a companion of Guru Gobind Singh, writes in his Rehat Nama that when the Guru was asked about his successor, he replied that after his death he would exist in three forms (a) Nirgun (invisible) (b) Shabad (Word) and (c) Sargun (visible) in Khalsa. He is then said to have bowed to the Granth and ceremoniously passed on the Guruship to the Granth. He changed its name from Pothi Sahib to Guru Granth Sahib and said that henceforth whoever wished to seek guidance, enlightenment, or solace should reverently read the Guru Granth Sahib. 223 Another contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh was Bhai Chaupa Singh. In his Rehat Nama he also records that Guru Gobind Singh designated the Granth as the Guru.224

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221 “महानाथ संकल्प में क्या भेंत पूजन तै भेंति मार्ग पुस्तक की सारा तथा गुरु तन्त्री के न्याय को दिया गया है हाय सब वांछित है के संग सहित दिया गया है। यह पुस्तक के लिए अन्य नहीं है और सारा तथा गुरु तन्त्री के न्याय को दिया गया है यह पुस्तक के लिए अन्य नहीं है।”

222 अबाल भक्त वे वन्दन निश्चित पूजन सन्तिकिरित पत्र। सब निश्चित वे वन्दन निश्चित पूजन। पूजन भक्त निश्चित पूजन सन्तिकिरित पत्र। बैल भक्त निश्चित पूजन। (अन्य निश्चित पूजन सन्तिकिरित पत्र)

223 जैसे एक भक्त वे वन्दन निश्चित पूजन। तथा जैसे एक भक्त वे वन्दन निश्चित पूजन। (अन्य निश्चित पूजन सन्तिकिरित पत्र)

224 अबाल भक्त वे वन्दन निश्चित पूजन सन्तिकिरित पत्र।
Bhatt Vahi (of Talaunda Pargna Jind) mentions that the Guru placed five paisas and a coconut in front of the Granth Sahib and said, “it is my command that all should accept Sri Granth ji as their Guru in my place.”

A letter written by Mata Sundri Ji (wife of Guru Gobind Singh) reminds the Sikhs to accept only Guru Granth Sahib as the Guru and not Ajit Singh or Banda Bahadur.

Another earliest reference to appointing Guru Granth Sahib as the Guru is found in Gur Sobha Granth by Sainapat written in 1711 AD (3 years after the Guru’s death). In it we find that a day before his death Guru Gobind Singh, in answering a question from one of his followers, said, “I have bestowed my physical form of Guruship upon the Khalsa”. When the Sikhs enquired as to his spiritual form, the Guru is reported to have said, ‘The limitless everlasting ‘Word’ will remain the True spiritual Guru’.

In Gurbilas Patshahi Chheven (written by Kavi Sohan from May 1717 to 22 July 1718 AD (only eight and half years after Guru Gobind Singh’s death) the Granth is clearly mentioned as “Guru Granth”. It reads, “Consider the Granth the same as the Guru. Do not even think of distinguishing between Granth and the Guru”.

Koer Singh (1751 AD) and Kesar Singh Chhibber (1769 AD) again mentioned this fact in the later part of eighteenth century.

225 This Vahi (record book) has been researched by Giani Garja Singh
226 Further information on this topic is available in “Guru Granth Sahib, its Physics and metaphysics” written by Gurninder Kaur.
227 This letter is now in village Bhai Rupa
228 Sainapat was the court poet of Guru Gobind Singh.
229 "I have bestowed my physical form of Guruship upon the Khalsa"
230 "The limitless everlasting ‘Word’ will remain the True spiritual Guru”.
231 Koer Singh says that Khalsa was left under the protection of 'Awid siqgurU (The Granth) was the Guru after him.
232 Koer Singh says that Khalsa was left under the protection of "sword bearer=Khalsa) and that ‘Ak sRRI guru rUp smwn [ ds pwqSwhIAW rUp ieh gurUu gRMQ jI jwn ] (412) gurU drs ijh dyKnw sRI guru gRMQ drswie ] bwq krin gur so chY,pVHy gRMQ mn lwie (413)
233 Chhibber says, “grIb invwj isK sMgq hY qyrI ies dw kI hvwl ] bcn kIqw gRMQ hY gurU lV pkVo Akwl ] ”(crn 10/650) gurU hY Kwlsw Aqy Kwlsw hY gurU ] godI sRI swihb dyvI jI dI pwey, Bjn krnw SurU ” ( 65 1) “ dsvW pwqswh g`dI guirAweI dI gRMQ swihb nUM dy igAw ] Aj pRqK gurU Aswfw gRMQ swihb hY [ so eI igAw jo gRMQoN igAw “ (220) jo gRMQoN muVY soeI 65
Similarly Ghulam Mahyudin says that the Guru’s last words were, “There is no difference between the Guru and the ‘Word’ of the Granth.” Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, J.D. Cunningham, Syed Muhammad Latif and M.A. Macauliffe all mention the same thing. Ghanaya Lal in his book ‘Tarikh-e-Punjab’ also confirms this.

Sarup Das Bhalla (1774AD) also writes that “Guru Granth Sahib” was recognised as the Guru. Umdat-ut-Twarikh (written during the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by Sohan Lal Suri) also confirms that Granthi was bestowed with Guruship. “The godman then said that the Granth will be the Guru”.

Although some source material had admittedly been corrupted but the statements about bestowal of Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib made by the contemporary and near contemporary writers are so numerous that they cannot be easily brushed aside as a coincidence.

The Guru is believed to be mystically present in the Guru Granth Sahib (Word) and symbolically in the corporate body of the Khalsa. The first being the permanent spiritual Guru and the latter a collective and developing worldly Guru (Guide).

### 7.2 Akhand Paath

A continuous reading of the Granth Sahib is called *Akhand Paath*. The reading stops only after reading all 1430 pages. Usually it takes 48 hours. The word *Akhand paath* is nowhere mentioned in the Guru Granth Sahib and neither is there any evidence of any *Akhand Paath* having been organised by any of our Gurus. Guru Gobind Singh completed the Holy Granth in 1705 AD and *Akhand Paath* could start only after this event but we find no instructions for conducting *Akhand Paath*. 
It is assumed that the *Akhand Paath* started sometime after Baba Banda Singh’s death when the Sikhs were hunted and hounded everywhere (This period lasted roughly from 1716 to 1770 AD). In times of acute difficulty and danger their only hope lay in spiritual support. Historians believe that presumably the Buddha Dal started the reading of the Granth.\(^{237}\) The reading was always planned to end in the shortest time to avoid being attacked unexpectedly. Later when the Sikh religious places were occupied and controlled by the Hindus or the Hindu converts to Sikhism they introduced many rituals that go with *Akhand Paath* and contradict the teachings of the Granth.\(^{238}\) Although Giani Gian Singh writes in his *Panth Parkash* that Jassa Singh Ahluwalia organised an *Akhand Paath* in Harmander Sahib after defeating Ahmad Shah Abdali and reconstructing the shrine, the first *Akhand Paath* is said to have been organised only in 1909 AD by the Nirankari Sikhs.

These days *Akhand Paaths* have become a big business. Our so-called *Sants* organise hundreds of *Akhand Paaths* at one and the same time and there are seldom any people to listen and benefit from them. Even otherwise the speed at which the Bani is read during an *Akhand Paath* is such that even the most alert and mentally astute person cannot comprehend anything. Every effort is made to finish the reading within a stipulated period. This is sheer waste of time. The Guru has called such practices a mere show and superstition. He says, “God cannot be understood simply by reading scriptures; the deceitful pretenders are deluded by doubt”\(^{239}\)

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239 Learning undigested by thought is labour lost (Confucious)
The Guru calls such pretenders fools. The gullible Devotees are being deluded and cheated by the fraudsters in broad daylight. These Sants and Granthis then also proclaim the airy-fairy merit of the Akhand Paath, which no one has so far quantified and no one asks them to explain it.

The Sikh Rehat Maryada says, “Any person who asks for or arranges Akhand Paath should, as far as possible ensure that the reading is done by himself, his family or friends. If, for any reason, such a person is unable to get such help in the reading, he should at least listen to as much of the reading as possible. It is wrong for people to arrange for Akhand Paath without their being prepared to either read or listen to it.” (Sikh Rehat Maryada SGPC Amritsar English edition 1978 page 10)

7.3 Merit of Akhand paath.

There is not a word about Akhand Paath or its merit in the Holy Granth. Ask the Granthis and Sants to answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature of this merit?

2. Is it received in this world or the next? If in this world in what form? Cash or kind and how much for one Akhand Paath? If in the next world how certain can we be of receiving it?

3. Who receives it? The person who pays for Akhand Paath, the person/persons who read the Granth, the person/persons who cook and serve, the person/persons (if any) who hear the Paath? Is it equally distributed among all of them?

4. If two persons fight and injure each other seriously but both organise Akhand Paaths and pray for victory in the court, who wins?

240 mUrK pVih sbdu n bUJih gurmuiK ivrlY jwqw hy  (pMn w 1053) mUrK duibDw pVHih mUlu n pCwxih ibrQw jnmu gvwieAw ] (pMnw 1133) mUriK piV piV dUjw Bwau idRVwieAw ] (pMnw 424) mUrKu sbdu n cIneI sUJ bUJ nh kwie  (pMnw 938)

241 A 101-member committee of the so-called Sants issued a fake Rehat Maryada on 30 May 1998. In it they suggest so many anti-Gurmat rituals. For example the “Shabad” Guru is said to feel heat and cold and must be supplied warm clothes in winter and a fan in summer. The Shabad Guru must be offered food at certain times of the day. Ironically they never give the Guru a bath.
5. If a rich man pays for a continuous *Akhand Paath* from his ill-gotten wealth, how much would be the merit? Would he deserve a place in heaven?\(^{242}\) If a poor person has no wherewithal to have an *Akhand Paath* done but lives a very pious and virtuous life, would he go without any merit?

6. Would we derive the same amount of merit if the *Akhand Paath* were done from a recorded tape or on the Radio? If not why?

7. Although *Granthis* always give themselves a certificate by saying *Paath ended without a error* (ਪ੍ਰਥਵੀ ਬਚਾਈਗਾਂ ਸਮੁੱਖ ਦੀਖੀਆਂ). What if the *Paathis* unwittingly made mistakes in reading the *Granth*? Would they be punished? Would the amount of merit be reduced and if so by what formula and who suffers the loss? The reader or the paymaster?

8. Muslims, Jews, and Christians do not do *Akhand Paaths*. Would they all go without merit? Is hell reserved for them?

If you ask somebody why the *Akhand Paath* is being organised, the most likely answer would be “to have the house sanctified” (ਗ੍ਰੇਹ ਪ੍ਰੋਕਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਹੀਦਾ). One wonders whether the *Paath* will sanctify only one room, two rooms, the whole house or the whole street? Is sanctifying power of the *Granth* limited to that particular house or room? Why is the whole world not considered sanctified because the Holy *Granth* is in the world? Can a public bar or a brothel be sanctified if an *Akhand Paath* is done there?\(^{243}\) The Sikhs believe that God resides everywhere, then why is any house not considered sanctified without Guru Granth Sahib’s presence?\(^{244}\) The fact is that the house (our mind), which needs to be sanctified, remains unsanctified even after the *Akhand paath*.

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242 *KMN vMny pwsy klviq cIirAw (PMnw 488) KMN isau pweIAY nhI qoil ]mn dy rwm lIAw hY mol (PMnw 327) MNwieAw mgnu nrik lY jw (PMnw 196) MNwieAw mUTw sdw ibllwie (PMnw 1176) MNwieAw moih kVy kiV picAw ] (PMnw 1140)

243 This question was sent to me by a young London Sikh when some people took Guru Granth Sahib into a public bar at Slough (England)

244 *MND vIAY wIsD hY koTVI scy kw ivic vwsu (PMnw 463) Iehu jgu vwVI myrw pRBu mwlI (PMnw 118)
The Gurus have instructed the Sikhs to read the Granth, understand the meanings and to act upon the instructions. Mechanical reading carries no value and no number of Akhand Paaths, Sampat Paaths or Silent Paaths can compel God to change His laws. Bhai Gurdas says, “Even if you go on saying “sugar” throughout the day, no sweetness is felt by the tongue unless you actually eat sugar.”

The merit of reading Gurbani accrues only when one understands the Guru’s message, internalises it and moulds his life style accordingly. This is possible only when one reads the Guru’s Bani (or hears it read) attentively. Those who expect to receive any spiritual merit of the Akhand Paath in the next world must note what the Guru says about it, “The hands of the go-between are cut off; this is the Lord’s justice. O Nanak, in the world hereafter, that alone is received, which one gives to the needy from his own earnings and labour”.

245 gwIAY suxIAY mn rKIAY Bwau (jpujI) gurmuK jnm skwrQw gurbwxI piV smiJ suxyhI (BweI gurdws vwr 1/3) vIcwir mwrY qrY qwry aulit join n Awvey (pMnw 68) sbsY aUpr gur sbd bIcwru (pMnw 1410) siqgur bcn kmwvxy scw iehu vIcwru (pMnw 52) “gurU vwk ijn idRVH kr mwny, so mm pXwro isK mhwny pRBU srUp irdy mo Dwro, gurbwxI ko irdY ibcwro prXo ArQ jo Sbd mJwrw bwr bwr aur krhu vIcwrw” (sUrj pRkwS rwSI 1 /64) “ivcwrvwn auhI hY jo Aml krdw hY gurU dy Sbd nwl mn nUM smJwauxw hY rtn qW typ rIkwrfr bMdy nwloN vDIAw kr skdw hY 

246 jYsy KWf KWf khY muiK nhIN mITw hoie, jb lg jIB swid KWf nhI KweIAY (kibq 542)

247 syvk isK pUjx siB Awvih siB gwvi h hir hir auqm bwnI gwivAw su ixAw iqn kw hir Qwie pwvY ijn siqgur kI AwigAw siq siq kr mwnI (pMnw 669) nwnk ij n@I suix kY mMinAw hau iqnw ivthu kurbwxu (pMnw 790) jh krxI qh pUrI miq (pMnw 25) hm so bwq krn ko cwhih, pVih sunih gurU gRMQ aumwih iqs mih khXo jo krY kmwvn, cwr pdwrQ lY mn Bwvn 

248 vFIAih hQ dlwl ky musPI eyh kryie nwnk AgY so imlY ij Kty Gwly dyie (pMnw 472)
Chapter Eight
The Living Guru

Guru Arjan Dev first edited the Adi Granth in 1604 AD. At that time it contained only the hymns written by the first five Sikh Gurus as well as fifteen Hindu and Muslim Bhagats (votaries of God). Most of these Bhagats belonged to the so-called depressed or untouchable classes. The main criterion for including their hymns in the Granth was the stage of their spiritual development and their philosophy of life. A Sikh named Bhai Banno prepared a second copy of the Granth. Bhai Banno’s copy of the Holy Granth is said to have been termed brackish (खरी) by Guru Arjan Dev because it contained some spurious hymns, which the Guru did not approve. Guru Gobind Singh later edited the Granth once again at Damdama Sahib in 1705 AD and included the hymns written by the Ninth Guru but he intentionally did not include any of his own hymns in it. The Granth was now complete.

Some people call the Sikh scripture a living Guru of the Sikhs. Some of them even use electric fans in the Guru’s room in summer and provide blankets in winter. Their devotion and love for the Guru is exemplary and deserves appreciation. However there are certain issues that cannot be resolved through intense devotion only.

249 The Guru clearly said, “Anybody copying the Banno recension must have it checked thoroughly. If copied from Gurdas recension then it will be automatically correct.” Some historians state that it was called Kharī because it had been prepared for use by the Sangat of village KHAIPA.
Did Guru Arjan Dev prepare the (human) body of a living Guru that feels hot and cold? If so were there two living Gurus at the same time (Guru Arjan Dev and Pothi Sahib. Did one living Guru produce another living Guru?). Was there a third lesser Guru in Bhai Banno’s version? Did Guru Gobind Singh create the same living Guru once again or was it a different living Guru? Which of the two was physically (biologically?) complete? Was *Pothi Sahib* (prepared by Guru Arjan Dev) only a half-born Guru? Can the same living Guru be created by two different people at two different times spanning one hundred years? Living objects are born. On which date was living Guru Granth Sahib born (1604 AD or 1705 AD)? Why did it take about two years for Bhai Gurdas and Guru Arjan Dev to affect the birth of the living Guru? Living beings do not take that long when they are born. Living objects grow, feed, wash, defecate and eventually die. Can we say this for Guru Granth Sahib? Bhai Gurdas created the body of the Granth. Can we then say that Bhai Gurdas (the creator) was greater than Guru Granth Sahib (his creation)? How do we interpret the hymn, which reads, “*The Gurus, who are born to serve others, are neither born nor do they die.*” What happens to the very old unserviceable copies of the Granth? Do we consider them as living and thus burn our living Gurus alive? These and many such questions demand answers.

The fact is that Guruship represented two important aspects of Sikhism: (1) The congregation and (2) The ‘Word’. The living human Gurus provided the mystic unity between the two. It is for this reason that all gatherings were not called Sangat. A Sangat was only that congregation where Truth (God) was the object of veneration.

Later when the Granth was established it began to be looked upon as the incorporated ‘Word’ (Shabad) of the living Guru. Guru Arjan Dev himself is said to have occupied a lower place than the Holy Scripture (primordial Word). The Granth began to be looked upon by the congregation as the

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250 Bhai Gurdas, son of Datar Chand (younger brother of Guru Amar Das), was the scribe who recorded the hymns in the first copy of the Granth. Some historians believe that he was the son of Ishar Das Bhal (cousin of Guru Amar Das) and his mother was Mata Jivani. He lost both his parents at the age of 12 and was brought up by Guru Amar Das. Under the Guru’s direction he learnt Sanskrit, Braj Bhasha, Persian, Urdu, and Punjabi and became a great scholar, philosopher and a poet.

251 *jnm mrx duhhU mih nwhI jn praupkwrI Awey (pMnw 749)*

252 (1) *ivic sMgiq hir pRBu vrqdw buJhu sbd vIcwir (pMnw 1314) (2) (sbdy riv rihAw gur rUip murwry] (pMnw 1112)

253 *sqsgIq kYsI jwxIAY] ijQY eyko nwmu vKwxIAY] (pMnw 72)

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spiritual embodiment of the Guru and a treasure house of the mystical ‘Word’. Even when Guru Arjan Dev was not physically present the congregation felt his presence and was mystically blessed by the Granth.

Later Guru Gobind Singh formally offered the spiritual leadership to the completed Granth and the temporal or congregational leadership to the Panth (Holy congregation). Thus the mystical ‘Word’ (Shabad) of the Guru in the Granth assumed the role of the nirgun God and the Panth represented the visible Guru-blessed organisation (Khalsa) standing for Sargun qualities of God.

Guruship of the Granth Sahib (the bearer of Spiritual ‘Word’) was a logical alternative to personal spiritual Guruship because a living human Guru could not be expected to live forever in a physical body. The secular organisational and corporate political leadership of the congregation was accorded a second place and offered to the Khalsa (Guru Panth). Mr. Archer attaches far more importance to Guru Granth than to Guru Panth and says that the doctrine of the Granth being the Guru gave the Sikhs a unique importance.

Guru Gobind Singh’s rescension of the Holy Granth (known as the Damdami rescension of the Granth) was printed and published in 1860 AD and is now recognised as the authentic Guru of the Sikhs. The centrality of the Guru Granth in a Gurdwara and in all Sikh ceremonies points to the fact that the Sikhs have great reverence for their Granth and their spiritual as well as temporal life is greatly influenced by its instruction. They believe that the divine spirit that beatified Guru Nanak and later enlightened the descendant Gurus now resides in the ‘Word’ (Shabad) of the Granth. There is, therefore, nothing in a Sikh’s life that does not revolve around Guru Granth Sahib. It serves as a magnet for the Sikh unity. It should be noted that the living Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh were not worshipped in person like a statue and the same applies to Guru Granth Sahib.

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257 It is for this reason that during the Guru-period (1469-1708 AD) the birth days and martyrdom days of the Gurus were not celebrated. After 1604 AD all importance began to be given to the Holy Scripture. So much so that Guru Arjan Dev always placed the Pothi Sahib higher and always sat in front as a humble servant. Performance of the Hindu “Arti” is an un-Sikh practice and was never performed by any Guru.
8.1 Living Guru

Let us now consider why the Guru Granth came to be called the Living Guru? The Sikh Gurus did not call the Granth living Guru at any time and neither did any historian or contemporary Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh. Giani Gian Singh wrote Panth Parkash in the year 1889 AD in which he copied a stanza from an earlier writing of a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh and changed it slightly. He wrote:

\[ \text{AwigAw BeI} \]
\[ \text{Akwl kI qbI} \]
\[ \text{clwieE pMQ, sb isKn ko hukm hY gurUu mwnIE gRMQ} \]
\[ gurU gRMQ jI mwnIE pRgt gurW kI dyh, jo pRB ko imlbo chY} \]
\[ \text{Koj sbd mYN lyh} \]

Most Sikhs do not accept that the Guru is material and yet recite the above stanza with gusto and consider the Granth as visible material body of the Guru (\text{pRgt gurW kI dyh}). Little do they realize that this stanza does not match with Gurbani where it is stated umpteen times that Shabad is the Guru. A Shabad has no body (\text{dyh}).

The original couplet was written by Bhai Prahlad Singh (Guru Gobind Singh’s childhood friend). His couplet does make sense and is in line with the Guru’s philosophy. He had written:

\[ \text{Akwl purK ky bcn isau} \]
\[ \text{pRgt clwieE pMQ} \]
\[ \text{sb isKn ko bcn ieh gurUu mwinE gRMQ} \]
\[ \text{gurU Kwlsw mwnIE pRgt} \]
\[ \text{gurU kI dyh} \]
\[ \text{jo isK mo imlbo chY Koj ienhoN my lyh} \]

Translation:- “Panth (a body of God-loving people) has been founded under directions from God. All Sikhs are bidden to consider Granth (Word=Shabad) as their spiritual (Nirgun) Guru. The manifest body of the Guru will now onwards be represented by Guru Khalsa (Committed God-oriented human beings). Any Sikh who wishes to seek me should find

\[ \text{Note that this couplet was changed by Giani Gian Singh in 1880 AD to read “gurU gRMQ jI mwnIE prgt gurW kI dyh, jW kw ihrdw SuD hY Koj sbd mih lyh” which does not agree with the philosophy of the Guru Granth Sahib like Prahlad Singh’s original couplet did. Guru Khalsa is the visible body of the Guru and Guru Granth Sahib is the spiritual Guru (Shabad) NOT A BODY (dyh). For the first 40 years of my life the second part of the couplet was read as “jW kw ihrdw SuD hY Koj sbd mih lyh” in his Panth Parkash Rattan Singh Bhangu also accepted “jW kw ihrdw SuD hY Koj sbd mih lyh” which is closer to the Gurmat Philosophy. Everybody wants to meet God but only those with \text{“SuD ihrdw”} can hope to meet Him. (\text{pMnw 232 Ihrdw hir ky crx vsweI}) \]
The Guru of the Sikhs and indeed of the whole Universe is the “Word” (Shabad), which is eternal.”

The ‘Word’ (Shabad) is spiritual energy, which like physical energy, can change its form but is indestructible and invisible. Therefore the only appropriate adjective that suits the Sikh Sacred Scripture is not Living Guru (ਜੀਵ ਗੁਰੂ) but Eternal Guru or Immortal Guru (ਅਕਾਲ ਗੁਰੂ).260

8.2 The Holy Book

Another question is sometimes raised by some deeply devoted Sikhs. They do not like the Holy Granth Sahib to be called “The Holy Book”. Ironically they accept the Gutkas, Panj Granthees and Sanchees as sacred books but do not call them Smaller (or baby) Guru Granth Sahibs. They also accept quotations from the sacred Granth printed in various books and newspapers without questioning why their living Guru has been dismembered by printing a verse here and a hymn there. Obviously anything recorded on paper and then bound for posterity is a book whether it is big or small. Religious books have always been called Pothis or Granth.261 For example five days before the death of Guru Nanak (2.9.1539 AD), the Guruship was passed to Guru Angad Dev. Puratan Janam Sakhi records this incident as follows:

The hymns composed by the Guru until then were passed on to Guru Angad in the form of a Pothis (A book).”

Our Gurus themselves called religious books Pothis (book). Guru Nanak wrote, “Now the Pothis, the Pandits and their Puranas have lost their influence.”

259 ibn sbdY AMqir Awnyrw ] (pMnw 124) ibn sbdY cUkY nhI PyrI ] (pMnw 1052). A Guru does not die.

260 gurmiq nwmu myrw pRwn sKweI hir kIriq hmrI rhrwis  (pMnw 10) The Guru’s Teaching is my life-long friend. The singing of the Lord’s Praises is my prayer routine.

261 The old copies of Guru Granth Sahib had the word Pothis written on them. The Pothis became the Guru only after 1708 AD. The word Pothis is used for the scripture in Prem Sumarg (see P.6). Bhai Sukha Singh writes, “Pothis are the Almanac of my life. (ਜੂਨੀਨਾਦ ਜੂਨ ਕਹਿੰਦੀ)"

262 Pothis became the Guru after 1708 AD. The word Pothis is used for the scripture in Prem Sumarg (see P.6). Bhai Sukha Singh writes, “Pothis are the Almanac of my life. (ਜੂਨੀਨਾਦ ਜੂਨ ਕਹਿੰਦੀ)"

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Guru Arjan Dev also called it “Pothi” (sacred book)\textsuperscript{263} and wrote, “When I opened the treasure of my ancestors, I was enriched.” Obviously he was not opening the treasure chest in the literal sense; he was referring to the Holy writings of the previous Gurus contained in the \textit{Pothi Sahib}. He imbibed the wisdom of our Great Gurus and passed it on to the posterity.

Bhagat Kabir also called the scripture \textit{Pothi}, “\textit{Pothi} (Book)\textsuperscript{264}.

There are copious references in Bhai Gurdas calling the Granth as “\textit{Pothi}\textsuperscript{264} (Book). It should also be noted that the word “\textit{Granth}” itself means a big book. Even in Bhai Banno’s rescension the word “\textit{Pothi}” is used for it.\textsuperscript{265} By calling the Holy Granth a book its importance is not reduced. Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Hindus all call their scripture books and still hold them sacred.

It is absurd to think that if man had not learnt to read, write and produce \textit{Granth}, there would have been no Guru or that the Guru is dependant on man’s ability to produce him. According to Sikhism a Guru is ever present and is eternal.\textsuperscript{266} The real Guru of the Sikhs is the “\textit{Word}\textsuperscript{267}.”

\textsuperscript{263} poQI gIq kivq ikCu jdy n krin DirAw (pMnw 70) poQI pMifq gIq kivq kvqy BI jwsI jqI sqI sMinAwsIAw siB kwlY vwsI (pMnw 1100) poQI pMifq byd KojMqw jIau hoie bYrwgI qIriQ nwvMqw jIau (pMnw 216) isimRiq byd purwx pukwrin poQIAW nwn ibnw siB kUVu gwl@I hoCIAw (pMnw 761) qIrQ dyv dyhurw poQI

\textsuperscript{264} gurbwxI ilK poQIAW qwl imRdMg rbwb bjwvY (vwr 6),

\textsuperscript{265} sMmq 1659 imqI AsU vdI eykm poQI iliK phuMcy jpu gurU rwm dws jIau ky nkl kw nklu

\textsuperscript{266} siqguru boihQu Awid jugwdI rwm nwim insqwrw hy (pMnw 1029) siqguru myrw sdw sdw nw AwvY n jwie (pMnw 759) guru myrY sMig sdw hY nwly (pMnw 394)

\textsuperscript{267} sbdu gur dwqw ijqu mnu rwqw hir isau rihAw smweI (pMnw 601) sbdu gur piRw gihr gMBIrw ibnu sbdY jgu baurwn μ (pMnw 635) sbdu gurU prkwisE hir rsn bswXau (pMnw 1407) ) sbdy riv rihAw gur rUip murwry (pMnw 1112)
Since the modern methods of recording the sound had not yet been invented in the times of our Gurus, the Guru’s “Word” could only be conveyed to posterity by recording it in a book. Guru Granth Sahib became the Guru of the Sikhs only because it enshrined the “Word” of our Gurus otherwise there were (and still are) millions of other Granths. We show utmost respect and reverence to the Granth because it is the seat of the sacred “Word” which is our Guru. If somebody translates Guru Granth Sahib (Guru=sacred, Granth=Book) as sacred book or scripture, He should not be condemned or ridiculed instead it should be explained to him that the Guru’s “Word” has sanctified this Granth and the object of reverence for the Sikhs is the Guru’s numinous “Word”, not the visible form of the book. The Sikhs do not bow to the paper, ink, binding or the cloth accompanying the “Word” because that would mean worshipping material things forbidden to the Sikhs. The genuine respect for Guru Granth Sahib does not lie simply in calling it Guru Granth Sahib instead of ‘A sacred Book’. The genuine respect lies in reading the scripture and living a life of virtue according to its principles.

It is time the Sikhs stopped considering the Guru Granth Sahib as an image or a statue for ritual worship and make Gurbani available to the whole world in translations. The Guru’s “Word” whether in original or in translations, cannot be desecrated, defiled or sullied by naming it a book. It is mystical and supernatural not material. The genuine respect for the “Word” does not lie simply in calling it Guru and never going beyond bowing to it.

8.3 Printing and distribution of the Granth

Until 1865 AD the Guru Granth Sahib was written by hand and sometimes one and the same copy was written by more than one person. From 1865 to 1890 AD the Holy Granth was printed through lithography. The printers and publishers (like Kohinoor press, Mufeed Am press, Aftab press, Chame Noor press, Wazir Hind press, and Ganesh Das press) printed and sold the Granth in various sizes and formats. They even committed hundreds of printing mistakes. One can easily imagine what sort of respect these trade-orientated and non-Sikh publishers may have shown to the Granth at the time of printing and selling.
During 1880-1887AD Kanwar Bikram Singh and Professor Gurmukh Singh raised the issue of respect for the Granth and its correct printing and sale. Sri Guru Singh Sabha Lahore asked for a law regarding the publication rights of the Granth and for banning its sale in shops. The publishers vehemently opposed the demand because their trade was to be adversely affected. They raised a number of issues, which could not be resolved before the death of the two great protagonists. The issue is still akeve.

1. The printing and distribution of the Granth and Gutkas etc should be in the hands of a single Sikh organisation authorised by law to publish and supply them. Each copy should be numbered and a proper record should be kept of the distribution. Members of this organisation should be well versed in Sikh history and philosophy.

2. The Granth should be offered free to qualifying organisations, Sikhs Gurdwaras and research scholars.

3. Translations of Gurbani should be permitted but they should first be checked by the said organisation against misrepresentation of Sikhism. They should be printed and supplied by the said organisation but the writers should be offered the necessary royalty.

4. The above organisation should institute research in Sikh history by offering stipends to researchers and publish their work by offering proper remuneration.

5. Old and unserviceable copies of the Granth should be received back by the said organisation, written off and heir disposal properly recorded. Copies, which have historical importance, need to be properly preserved for posterity.
Chapter Nine
Meeri Peeri

Readers of the history of India would know that although Indian people boast of doughty warriors like Karna and Arjuna etc., there came a time when they nearly lost all their valour and manliness. This happened when after the battle of Kalinga Emperor Ashoka abandoned the use of the sword and adopted non-violence as the guiding principle for all Indians. This was in agreement with the principles of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and renunciation so assiduously preached by Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism at that time. But *Ahimsa* and active resistance do not go together and are antipodes of each other. People became cowards to an extent that they would not even kill a fly. High spirits and bravery were thus abandoned and religion became a matter of personal salvation only. Loyalty in times of need remained confined only to the immediate members of the family. This prompted foreign invaders to come like wind and go back like whirlwind looting and plundering the country without facing any effective resistance. Even shepherds like Timur plucked up courage to ravage the country and take away beautiful damsels for sale in Afghan markets while the Indian nation of so-called warriors simply quailed and quivered before him. Not a single *Sant* or religious leader raised his voice against such rape, repression and rapacity until Guru Nanak felt irresistible compulsion to speak up. The seed of *Meeri Peeri* principle was sown. It only needed careful nurturing.

Although the words Meer (Temporal authority) and Peer (Spiritual authority) have been used by Guru Nanak umpteen times, the combination of both *Meeri* and *Peeri* has only been derived from various statements of

270 Arjuna, the brother-in-law of Lord Krishna, is known as the invincible prince. However it is also a fact that while he was escorting the ladies of the family from Dwarka, he was waylaid and looted by the Bheels.

271 तन मैं तुसक होट तोड़ी, तीजो अवसान ता अवभुव अवसानी। दिनों धूले बिल्ड में भत पड़े, ज्यादों में बैठे तट पड़े?

272 Later in the Mughal period the Hindus themselves started offering their sisters and daughters to the Mughals and considered it an honour.

273 Maratha saint Eknath (c.1586) writes, “Hindus had become so dependant that they accepted leftovers from the food of Turkish Muslim rulers at the time of Eid.”
the Sikh Gurus and the history of the Sikhs. To state it in a nutshell ‘it is the combination of a new man (Gurmukh), and a new social order (Panth), and a new political set up (Khalsa protectorate=लोक राजवंश)’…a fully democratic compact community, armed to the teeth, struggling to maintain what it conceived to be the right path and fighting incessantly and without compunction, tyranny and injustice in all their forms.” (I.B.Bannerjee ‘Evolution of the Khalsa Part 2 Page).274

Some people associate Meeri Peeri with Guru Hargobind whereas others argue that it had started with Guru Nanak who originated the concept of worldly sovereignty and spiritual elevation for all who followed him. The latter groups argue that in Sikhism temporal and spiritual go hand in hand and were duly sanctioned by Guru Nanak. The proper use of political power (even if it entailed militancy) was justified and sanctioned by Guru Nanak if such power was used for a noble and egalitarian cause.

Guru Nanak was using moral power and arousing the people of India to value their culture and traditions. It was not his aim to enslave others or wage a war but he was aware that power was necessary to resist the onslaught of foreigners who were trampling the Indian culture. He knew that Bhakti (spiritualism) without Shakti (Power) was too vulnerable and Shakti without Bhakti (as was practised by Babar, Hitler or Changez Khan) was bound to become fascist. He wanted to steer clear of both these extremes and therefore concentrated more on Bhakti than Shakti.275 The Bhakti remained supreme in his system and was to act as a guide for Shakti and this combination later came to be called Meeri and Peeri.

Although Guru Nanak was not openly a political activist and never raised a sword, his ideas about kingship, administrative set-up of the time and political exploitation are stated explicitly and give us the impression that he was not completely immune to politics and the effects of foreign invasions. In fact in his Babar Bani he admonishes the Lodhi rulers and analyses the causes of the defeats of the Indians.

274 “मनुष्य लाल ऐसे मनुष्य विजय उत्तरकर्दे” Knowledge and education flourish only if the sword shields the country.
275 “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.” (Preamble to the constitution of UNESCO.). This is what Guru Nanak thought.
He tells us that the Indians depended more on magic than might and thus brought about their own downfall.²⁷⁶ He even talks about their inferior weapons²⁷⁷ and explicitly exhorts the Indians for sacrifice. He said: “If you wish to play the game of love (for your country), Come and join me with your head on your palms. Those who join me must be ready to die for the cause and may not flinch from fighting.”²⁷⁸ He even persuaded the Indians openly to rise against the foreign invaders when he said, if one lives in dishonour; then everything one eats is like eating carrion.²⁷⁹ Such strong words cannot be attributed to an Ahimsa loving, salvation seeking, self-negating Sadhu.

No Hindu saint throughout the length and breadth of India had raised even an eyebrow when the powerful Emperor Babar invaded India and perpetrated indignities on the Indian people. Only Guru Nanak plucked up courage and openly condemned Babar as an aggressor and his army a pack of sinners.²⁸⁰ He even complained to God and asked, “Such atrocities have been committed didn’t you feel pain?”²⁸¹ He castigated the rulers of India as people “more interested in enjoyment and profligacy than in the protection of their countrymen.”²⁸² He boldly passed judgements on their state of justice and their suitability as rulers and even called them bloodthirsty hounds.²⁸³ Can such vitriolic comments be expected from a coward who advocates only spiritualism and abhors militancy?

²⁷⁶ कहते हैं कि वह विजय के लिए अधिक अपना ध्यान रखते हैं। उन्होंने अपने लोगों के लिए समर्पण अहिंसा ही नहीं प्रचार किया। उन्होंने कहा कि: “मैंने आपके लिए मुलाकात की है। आपका समर तो आपके सामने है और आपको यह स्वीकार करना होगा कि आप अपनी जीवन को खत्म करना चाहते हैं।”²⁷⁸ उन्होंने दिए राजगुरु को कहा कि: “यदि आप मुझसे जोड़ते हैं, तो आपके सामने आपकी मूर्खता का दृष्टि केंद्र बना देंगे।”²⁷⁹ उन्होंने कहा कि: “आयुष्य में सईबर्ग का उपयोग करने में यह सब सही है।”²⁸⁰ उन्होंने कहा कि: “जब भी आपके राज है, तब आपके लिए यह उपयोगी है।”²⁸¹ उन्होंने कहा कि: “यदि आपके माता-पिता के लिए यह सही है, तो आपको यह समझना चाहिए कि आपके लिए यह सही है।”²⁸² उन्होंने कहा कि: “यदि आपके लोगों की जित्ने की तारीफ़ नहीं है, तो आपके लिए यह सही है।”²⁸³ उन्होंने कहा कि: “यदि आपके लोगों की जित्ने की तारीफ़ नहीं है, तो आपके लिए यह सही है।”
Later Guru Amar Das also said the same thing when he wrote, “Surrender thy body, mind, wealth, and everything to the Guru and obey the Order to deserve bliss.” In fact it is a strain throughout the whole of Guru Granth Sahib that a Sikh should be ready to lay down his life for the Guru and the public good.\textsuperscript{284}

Guru Arjan Dev clarified the concept as follows:

“The kind Lord has now issued the command
That no one from now onward dominates others or causes tyranny.
And all would abide in peace and happiness.
Thus shall be realised here and now
A new era of tolerance and compassion.” \textsuperscript{285}

Because of his egalitarian manifesto the Guru soon became an eyesore for the prejudiced Emperor Jehangir who had assumed the autocratic right to foist the secular as well as the spiritual laws on all his citizens. He decided to convert the Guru to Islam. Propaganda mill was set in full swing to discredit the Guru, demonise him and pressurize him to tow the line. On the other hand the persecuted millions had now pinned their hopes on the Guru to save them from political oppression and bigotry. People were ready to resist evil tooth and nail. According to Muhammad Latif “The Guru was looked upon by his disciples not only in the light of a spiritual guide but also as a worldly Lord and a ruling sovereign (S.M.Latif “History of the Panjab” P.253). During this charged atmosphere prince Khusrau rebelled against the Emperor. It was now easy to falsely accuse the Guru of sympathies with the rebel prince. “There was a regular conspiracy against the Guru and we are told that besides participation in Khusarau’s rebellion, the charges against the Guru also included the allegations that he called himself TRUE Guru”(Transformation of Sikhism VIII. P.3)\textsuperscript{286} Muhammad Latif writes that the imperial policies towards the Guru had begun to change the perception of the ordinary people concerning the Guru’s popularity.

\textsuperscript{284} qnu mnu Dnu sBu sauip gur kau hukim mMinAY pw eIAY ] (pMnw 918) qnu mnu Dnu ArpI sBo sgl vwrIAY ieh
ijMdu ] (pMnw 47) qnu mnu Dnu ArpI iqn kau iniv iniv lwgau pwie ] (pMnw 587) qnu mnu Dnu hir AwgY rwjKAw ] (pMnw 1343)

\textsuperscript{285} huix hukmu hoAw imhrvwx dw\]pY koie n iksY r\wxdw\] sB suKwlI vuTIAw iehu hoAw hlymI rwju jIa (pMnw 74)

\textsuperscript{286} The words TRUE GURU (s`cw pwqSwh) may have been popularised by Bhai Gurdas who wrote, “siqgur scw pwqSwh hor kUVy pwqSwh duinAwvY ” The Guru was too humble to call himself a True Guru.
It appears that the Guru knew about the coming events and was preparing his followers to meet the challenge. He was soon arrested, tortured and martyred at Lahore (1606 AD). The martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev jolted the Sikhs. They were now convinced that their movement was facing certain extinction. There was no alternative but to fight in self-defence.

It was under such circumstances that Guru Hargobind, who was only eleven years old, became the next Guru of the Sikhs. He realized that the power-mad autocrat Jehangir was dead to all sense of humanity, and capitulation to him would prolong cruelty and injustice. Time had come to meet tyranny head on to save people’s rights and their religion from certain extinction therefore he brought into play the secondary part (resistance to tyranny) of Guru Nanak’s philosophy. He took a momentous decision to resort to arms and began arming his followers. This was a direct challenge to the legal restriction, which permitted only certain Muslims and Rajputs to bear arms.

On 25th May 1606 AD at the time of his investiture as the next Guru, he donned two swords on his person. On being asked the reason for wearing two swords the Guru is said to have remarked, “One sword represents “Peeri” (spiritual independence-Prophethood) and the other represents “Meeri” (Temporal independence-Citizen’s right). Since the first sword he wore was that of “Peeri” (Guruship), the Sikhs would always choose spiritual over the temporal affairs. Thus the Guru openly and symbolically combined spiritual and temporal aspects of human life and declared that at times the Sants may have to resort to sword to annihilate evil.

287 He also preached the same philosophy as preached by Guru Nanak when he wrote, “भिल्व मर्यादा कबूल करो जी आपों। इशारा मर्यादा रोशन अर्श भिल्व है। जी आपों।” (र. पंजा 1102) In the same vein Guru Amar Das had written ‘हरद मल्ल याद में मसूर नाड़ में मंडे पुन हतियार।’ (र. पंजा 1059).

288 Whenever an unjust judge controls the pen, some saint dies upon the gibbet (Jalal-ud-din Roomi) Jehangir wrote in his diary; “They called him Guru and foolish people flocked from all sides to express great devotion to him. This false traffic had been going on for three or four generations. For years the thought had been visiting my mind to put an end to this false traffic or convert him to the fold of Islam on some pretext.” (Tuzak-e-Jehagiri P.35)

289 Muslim Prophet Muhammad fought all through his life. Although Christ himself did not fight, his followers led wars on the Muslims. Hindu god Ram Chander carried Dhamush baan and fought a war against Ceylon, Krishna carried Sudarshan Chakra and encouraged Arjun to fight the war of Mahabharata, Hanuman carried a mace (गड़), Paras Ram used a great axe as a weapon. As for wearing two swords the Khalifas have been using dual authority of spiritual and temporal power since old times by wearing two swords. One of the Popes used to wear two swords. Martin Luther had challenged the “Papal doctrine of the two swords with its claim that the Pope was the ultimate source of all authority temporal as well as spiritual”. (‘Political Ideas’ by David Thomson 1972 page 30).
From that very day he began to instil Spirituality and bravery into the minds of the Sikhs. He sent messages to his followers to bring arms and horses to him and employed ballad singers to sing ballads of brave men to warm up the blood of the people who had become cowards. Military exercises became a daily routine. An army drum (an attribute only of sovereignty) was beaten twice a day in violation of the law that prohibited anyone beating a drum. Soon he established a fort outside Amritsar and named it LOHGARH (fort of steel). A pennant was also designed, which has since then become the flag of the nation and is known as *Nishan Sahib*.

In 1609AD he caused *Akal Takhat* (throne of the Almighty) to be constructed at the feet of Harimander Sahib. This positioning of the Akal Takhat was symbolic of the lower importance of politics to that of spirituality. But for the establishment of Akal Takhat and the arming of the Sikhs, the Sikh movement was in danger of quickly regressing into another Hindu sect. The message of the Akal Takhat was loud and clear that the Panth was meant to perform very high duties in addition to spiritual uplift of the Indian people. This reaction of Guru Hargobind was not an aggressive reaction but a logical consequence of the communal consciousness of the Sikhs and Guru Nanak’s philosophy, which were under serious threat. Having completed the above arrangements he declared *Deg* (Charity) and *Tegh* (Power) as his instruments of action. The Sikhs began to assemble regularly, discuss their problems and find solutions. He was arrested in 1609AD and imprisoned at Gwalior but fearing popular revolts, was released in 1611 AD. After the death of the Emperor in 1627AD, bigotry once again raised its head when Emperor Shah Jahan destroyed many Hindu temples including the *Baoli Sahib* (birth place of Guru Ram Das at Lahore). This provocation was enough to enrage the Sikhs and armed conflicts soon broke out between the Government and the Sikhs in which the Mughal commander Mukhlis Khan lost his life. According to *Mohsin Fani*290 volunteers flocked from all sides and soon “The Guru had seven hundred horses in his stables; and three hundred cavaliers and sixty artillerymen were always in his service.”

The Guru moved away to Kartarpur to ease the situation but he was attacked by the Mughal *faujdar* (commander) of Jalandhar. This time the

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290 Mohsin Fani was known to Guru Har Gobind and had met him on many occasions. He wrote a detailed Religious History of India titled *Dabistan-e-Mazahib.*
faujdar too lost his life. Later in another battle in 1632 AD the Mughal generals Kale Khan and Painde Khan were killed. Thus we see that it was not the Guru’s intention to change the character of the Sikhs but the policies of the Government had left the Guru with no alternative but to defend his nascent religion.

Guru Hargobind’s struggles, sufferings and especially successes had the magical effect of changing the coward people into an army of brave and staunch soldiers. This metamorphosis had been accomplished in defiance of the hide-bound prejudices and conservatism of the old Hindu religious concepts and the hegemony of the bigot Government of the time. The concept of Meeri Peeri had been tested for the first time and had proved effective.

A Hindu Sant Samrath Ram Das met Guru Hargobind Sahib at Garhwal in 1634 AD. He asked him to explain why he had switched from the peaceful posture adapted by Guru Nanak to the one he had adopted by wielding a sword. The Guru replied, “There is nothing new in what I have done. Saintliness strengthens the mind and the sword protects the oppressed. I am internally a Sant and externally a warrior.” After this statement of the sixth Guru the Sikhs began to consider the doctrine of Meeri Peeri as a fundamental and most essential doctrine of the Sikhs. Historians began to justify that temporal and the spiritual in Sikhism were in tandem and there existed no dichotomy between them. It was also argued that this ideology of the Sikhs differentiated Sikhism from most other religions.

A question is usually asked that if the concept of Meeri and Peeri was so significant why was it not clearly stated by the first five Gurus who never wielded a sword? Why is it that even the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th Gurus did not mention it and justify it when it had already been started by the Sixth Guru?  

291 On hearing this Samrath Ram Das said, “yeh hamare man bhavti hai” (This appeals to my mind) see Sakh Number 39 in “Punjab Sakhian” (Punjabi language). There is a reference to this meeting in Samarthanchi Bhakhar (1793) published by Gogate Bombay 1910. The Guru had to fight 18 battles in defence. No territory was occupied and no treasures were plundered. He spent seven years of his 38 years Guruship life in fighting.

292 Some historians mention that Guru Arjan Dev was an excellent horse rider and was very good at throwing a spear. He kept a number of horses looked after by Khera Fafra, nephew of Bhai Behlo, who later became a renowned Sikh. Guru Har Gobind and Guru Rai had armies. Guru Harkrishan died young. Guru Tegh Bahadur fought his first battle when he was mere a boy. A fighter does not have to declare his motto time and again. The manifesto is declared only once and that was done by Guru Har Gobind when the followers were ready for war.
McLeod writes, “Guru Hargobind had adopted a new policy, one which dramatically expresses in donning of two symbolic swords.” In other words he feels that Meeri and Peer are not complementary but contradictory and that it was a new policy different from that of Guru Nanak.

It needs to be understood that in Indian religions there had been a dichotomy between spiritual life and empirical life. They preached peace and renunciation but fought wars. For example the followers of Hindu scripture Gita preach peace but forget that Gita itself was the result of a fratricide war between the members of the same family. Ramayana preaches peace but the whole story talks of war. Muslims claim that Islam preaches peace but prophet Muhammad fought battles all through his life. Sikhism broke this tradition by considering that the defence of religion is as important as the defence of a country and established that like the negative and positive existing side by side in nature Meeri and Peer must also exist in humans at all times.

Meeri is purely temporal and entails fairness, justice, law, nationalistic feelings and egalitarian principles etc. The Sikh history tells us that in Sikhism the spirit of revolt against injustice, unfair treatment and nationalistic aspirations did not start and end with Guru Har Gobind, the sixth Guru, with whom this concept is usually associated.

History tells us that Guru Nanak courted arrest and imprisonment for opposing the tyranny of Babar. Guru Amar Das refused to pay discriminatory tax and thus invited the wrath of the Government. Guru Arjan Dev declined to enter the praises of Muhammad in the Holy Granth. Guru Hargobind had to fight a war even when he was busy in the wedding of his daughter. Guru Har Rai spurned the official order to appear in the court at Delhi and ostracized his son who had shown weakness to the Emperor, and Guru Tegh Bahadur accepted death than dishonour. The Meeri preached by Sikhism is not lust for political power.

293 Although Meeri Peer was concretised by Guru Hargobind and later Guru Gobind Singh re-established it, the seeds were sown by Guru Nanak himself. If Guru Tegh Bahadur only practised Peer then he would not have sacrificed his life to safeguard the rights of the others. Even Guru Gobind Singh declared openly that his war was against tyranny and oppression, which was his religious duty to uproot. "अनेक वालन वैह अभय पच्चन द्वारे वर्ने मे (I have no other ambition but to wage war to uphold righteousness). Peace is a treasure but war is a necessity. No religious leader could avoid war.
It is the establishment of universal everlasting rule of justice and fairplay, which is the declared aim of Sikhism.  

It is for this reason that no Sikh Guru occupied any land or set up a kingdom. *Meeri* of Sikhism is thus aimed at practically creating “Kingdom of God on earth,” which has been the aspiration of humanity. Only Spiritualism of this calibre can fight for and usher in paradise on earth. When after four generations the Indian mind had been sufficiently strengthened and prepared for resistance the ideal of *Meeri Peeri* was restated by Bhai Gurdas as follows:

“The worldly kings pass on their kingship to their descendants on their death. They simply inflate their ego and make others obey them like purchased workers. In the house of the Guru the custom is to produce Gurmukhs and just ways”.

**9.1 Guru Gobind Singh and militancy?**

Some western writers (especially Christian missionaries like McLeod, Archer and Loehlin) compare Guru Nanak with Guru Gobind Singh and complain that Guru Gobind Singh turned the pacifist movement of Guru Nanak into a militarised sect.

Even Arnold Toynbee, who finds Sikhism an excellent religion, faltered on this issue. He writes that the religion of Guru Gobind Singh was “Qualitatively different, if not diametrically opposed to that of Guru Nanak”.

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294 *bhai gurdas vwr 26 p: 31*

295 *dohI PyrY AwpxI hukmI bMdy sB ispwhI bwbwxy Gir cwl hY*

296 The missionary zeal of Loehlin and McLeod are reasons for their criticism of Sikhism. Their hidden agenda is to create a cleavage among the Sikhs and undermine their beliefs. It is acknowledged on all sides that the spiritual unity preached by Guru Nanak was at no time impaired by any of his successors. The Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh had no political aspirations. The sword had to be used to remove the obstacle in the path of spiritual development of the Indian nation. The aim of the 10th Guru is clearly stated as “**Drm clwvx sMq aubwrn**” This is the same as that preached by Guru Nanak.
Mahatma Gandhi also complained that Guru Gobind Singh changed the peaceful religion of Guru Nanak into a militant religion. Strangely no Muslim writer has tried to make any difference between the philosophies of Guru Nanak and that of Guru Gobind Singh. Only the Hindu writers and the westerners have raised this issue.

Rabinder Nath Tagore criticised Guru Gobind Singh for abandoning the peaceful path delineated by Guru Nanak and for adopting the sword to chastise his enemies. According to him the Sikh religion, which was a flowing river, ended up into a closed pool of stagnant water. The spiritual development of the Sikhs ceased and they became mere fighters. Rabinder Nath Tagore conveniently ignored the fact that Guru Gobind Singh never neglected the spiritual and moral development of the Sikhs nor did he ignore to attack the social distinctions based on caste, which had marred the Indian society for thousands of years. The use of sword was necessary to save the Sikh community from the ruthless persecution of the Moghul Emperor whose bigotry is well known. Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur had already tried the peaceful means advocated by Rabinder Nath Tagore and Gandhi. Mute response to persecution would have resulted in the extinction of Sikhism. At best the Sikhs would have survived only as an insignificant sect like Kabir-Panthies if the Guru had not raised the sword. Again it should be noted that Kabir did not raise a sword but there is no spectacular or discernible spiritual advancement among Kabir-panthies after him. Krishana, Rama and Muhammad fought wars but their followers were not in any way spiritually impoverished. About these double standards Dorothy Field writes, “It must not be...

297 Gandhi invented a new form of Hinduism when he began to preach Ahimsa (non-violence) and in a meeting at Baroda called Guru Gobind Singh “a misguided patriot” for raising a sword to defend the honour and dignity of India. Gandhi’s non-violence was only skin-deep. He openly supported the British in the Second World War, agreed to defend Kashmir by force of arms, lauded police action against Hydrabad and later died a violent death. Nehru, the first Prime minister of India, called him a hypocrite. Did Gandhi not know that a majority of Hindus worship Durga who carries ten weapons, Lord Krishna, Rama, and Parsu Ram were armed to the teeth and fought wars killing their own fellow citizens and relatives? In Gandhi’s eyes these Hindu leaders were true patriots but Guru Gobind Singh who fought the invaders to defend India was a “misguided patriot.” Can there be a more prejudiced and greater ingrate than Gandhi? Was he really following Lord Rama and Krishna, his beau ideals? Once he got a calf killed to release him from incurable pain, but he had no qualms of conscience in releasing millions of human beings from the barbarities and atrocities of the Mughals because it involved violence. He did not care to notice what Guru Gobind Singh said, “When affairs have gone beyond all means, it is lawful and virtuous to put the hand on the hilt of the sword.”

298 Rabinder Nath’s assessment was accepted by J.N.Sarkar, who too wrote similarly (Vol. I P.301, 332).
imagined that because he was a fine warrior he was less spiritual or less religious than his predecessors. He made the religious fervour the backbone of his warlike doctrines. He united practical skill with mystical meditation; and the results speak for themselves.”

The speculation that Guru Nanak’s spirituality and philosophy of peace would have spread worldwide if Guru Gobind Singh did not resort to the sword is ill founded. What is certain is that if Guru Gobind Singh had not raised the sword the Hindus of India would not have survived the slavery of the Muslims, which had lasted already for five centuries.

The Sikh movement planned by Guru Nanak was a social, political, religious, and egalitarian revolution, which had taken place in India only for the first time. The main aim was the all round amelioration of the Indian people. India being religious in his days (which it still is), he wanted religious reform to take precedence over political and social reform. If Guru Nanak had openly declared his intention to raise a sword, there would have been opposition not only from the Government of the time but also from the general population, which had become pusillanimous and utterly coward because of Ahimsa so assiduously preached by Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. The Guru would have been branded a rebel and his mission would have ended before it even started. This is evident from the fact that nearly 200 years later when Guru Gobind Singh established the Khalsa, the Hill Rajas opposed him tooth and nail and became the sworn enemies of the Guru in spite of the fact that the Guru was fighting their battles to save the latter’s religion and dignity.

The Sikh Gurus were not simply spiritual leaders seeking personal salvation like the Hindu Sants. Over and above being religious preceptors they were also practical and social entrepreneurs aiming to spiritually and socially elevate the society they lived in. The blueprint for the Sikh movement was carefully planned and announced by Guru Nanak. According to Gokal Chand Narang, “...after centuries of subjection Nanak was the first among the Hindus to raise his voice against tyranny and oppression. To achieve that objective people had to be marshalled for active resistance. The concept of passive submission had to yield to that of physical encounter, to which masses had to be awakened.” (Transformation of Sikhism Page 40) Unfortunately at that early stage the Guru could not take up the sword because he did not have the means to encounter physically the well-established centuries old Government. He
laid the foundations for what was to follow next.

Guru Gobind Singh did not discard the policies of Guru Nanak and suddenly turn militant. He was as much interested in religious, political and social uplift of Indian society, as was Guru Nanak. Therefore the charge of changing the direction of the movement is invalid. In fact there is a strong logical link between the thinking of Guru Nanak and that of the latter Gurus. Each Guru in turn added his bit to the movement. The period from the time of Guru Angad to Guru Ram Das (1539-1581= 42 years) was too short to dissipate energy for a secondary purpose (resistance to tyranny). This time was therefore wisely utilized by the Gurus to get a stronghold in the minds of the people by preaching only the altruistic and spiritual principles of Sikhism (Peer). Resort to arms (Meeri) was not a priority because the political power had not yet become as extortionate, bigot and oppressive as it later started becoming under Jehangir and reached its climax under Aurangzeb. It was then that the time had come to turn the ploughshares into the swords. Again it is for this reason that only Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur had instructed their sons to wield the sword and the other Gurus did not do so.

After the sacrifices of peace-loving Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur there was no alternative left for Guru Gobind Singh but to institute the Khalsa to save the nascent Sikh movement from the persecution of the fanatical Muslim rulers. He was not fighting for establishing a kingdom but to defend the fundamental rights of the people, which had been trampled under the jackboot of fanaticism. In this connection Mr. Cunningham explicitly states that Guru Nanak had started a campaign by weaning away his followers from Hindu idolatry, Muslim superstition, and Sidh quietism, which gained continual momentum under the next Gurus and culminated in a much-desired political organisation to shield the religion. He further writes that Guru Gobind Singh “effectually roused the dormant energies of a vanquished people, and filled them with
lofty although fitful longing for social Freedom and national ascendance, the proper adjuncts of that purity of worship which had been preached by Nanak.” (Cunningham Page 84) He clarifies the point further and writes, “It was reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform, and to lay those broad foundations which enabled his successor Gobind to fire the minds of his countrymen with a new nationality, and to give practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest in race and in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes.”

Mr. I.B.Bannerjee has discussed this issue in detail and concludes, “Those who call this a ‘dwarfing of the unity of a religious sect into an internment of political advancement’ commit themselves, at the same time, to the absurd proposition that military efficiency or political Freedom is inconsistent with a true religious life.” (Evolution of the Khalsa part 2, P.124)

Banda Singh followed the same policy after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. Although the Emperor issued an order on December 10, 1710 that the Sikhs “should be killed at sight wherever found.” Banda Singh never molested any Muslims, the co-religionists of the Emperor. In his letter dated 29 April 1711 the Mughal newsletter writer wrote about Banda Singh to the Emperor “Any Muslim who approaches him, he fixes a daily allowance and wages and looks after him. He has permitted them to read Khutba and Namaz with the result that five thousand Muslims have gathered round him. Having entered into his friendship, they are free to shout their call (Azan) and recite their prayers in the army of the wretched.” (Akhbarat-e-Darbar-e-Muala (Jaipur) Ruqat-e-Amin-ud-Daula No.3 Dastur-al-Insha 6A.

Careful understanding of Sikh history proves that there was no fundamental difference between the philosophies of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh and that Meeri Peeri was started by Guru Nanak, nurtured by the next four Gurus, materialized by the 6th Guru and concretised by the 10th Guru. The Sikhs have always fought against political tyranny, religious intolerance, social inequality and economic exploitation and all this at times demanded unwanted but necessary violence. It was for this

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301 Banda Singh was arrested with his 794 colleagues, who were all cruelly butchered in Delhi. British ambassadors John Surman and Edward Stephenson saw the gory spectacle and wrote, “It is not a little remarkable with what patience they undergo their fate, and to the last it has not been found that one apostatised from this new formed religion to save his muddy vesture of decay.” (Letter No. XXI to the Governor of Fort William dated March 10, 1716). On June 9, 1716 Banda Singh’s flesh was torn with hot pincers and his son’s innards were thrust into his mouth before he died.
reason that Akal Takhat (Seat of Meeri) was erected later than Harimander (Seat of Peeri) and was made to face Harimander the fountain hood of Bhakti (spirituality).

Thus we see that the militancy was not a deviation from Guru Nanak’s philosophy but only a fulfilment of his ideology. When peace was restored the 7th and the 8th Gurus had no cause for fighting

“The sword which carved the Khalsa’s way to glory was undoubtedly forged by Gobind, but the steel had been provided by Nanak.” (Transformation of Sikhism G.C.Narang P.1). Dr. Ernest Trumpp, though not very sympathetic to Sikhism, also wrote that the philosophy of all the Gurus remained the same and that the alleged changes made by Guru Gobind Singh were in line with the doctrines preached by Guru Nanak.

The Sikh ideal is Sant Sipahi, which combines spirituality with the courage and bravery of a soldier. Spirituality alone turns one into a coward unable to oppose the world’s Halakus and Hitlers and bravery alone turns one into tyrants like the Durranis. The Sikh sword is therefore not an instrument of offence and tyranny but a symbol of defence and protection.

“When Guru Govind inaugurated the sacrament of steel he proved himself a wise and farsighted leader. For of all material things which genius has inspired with spiritual significance, steel is the truest and most uncompromising. Let humanitarians prate, as they will there never has been a race that have not been purged and refined by it. In some it is the only combater of grossness and the monster of self. To the Khalsa it gave a cause and welded them into a nation, and in the dark days of Muhammadan rule in the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Sikh was slain at sight and no quarter was given, it drove them on those gallant crusades in which they rode to Amritsar in the dead of night, leapt into the sacred tank and out again, and galloped back through the enemies’ lines purified. Hundreds were slain, but not one abjured his faith or perjured his soul to preserve his ‘muddy vesture of decay’. (Edmund Candler in “The Mantle of the East”)

“In giving them direction and leadership Guru Gobind responded to call of history in a manner which was not at all inconsistent with the essence of Guru Nanak’s teachings. On the other hand one might say that tenth
Guru’s call evolved splendid response because the twin foundations of a new system — spiritual fervour and Freedom from fear — emanated directly from the founder’s teachings. From this point of view the emergence of Khalsa was the fulfilment of Guru Nanak’s mission.” A.C. Bannerjee page 209-210

9.2 Tantric concept unacceptable in Sikhism

The tantric concept of the unity of ‘Devotion’ and ‘occult power’ (बृहद्धर्म एवं अल्पदर्म) is nowhere mentioned in Sikhism. It is a cardinal principle of the Shakti cult, which indulges in sex and intoxication to achieve this unity. In his article titled “Guru Gobind Singh and the Shakti cult” Jatinder Mohan Chatterji deliberately commits this blunder and writes, “Gobind Singh’s interpretation of Tantric philosophy teaches man a new way of obtaining salvation through war. Thus he may be considered to be the typical prophet of the Shakti cult.” This sort of interpretation cannot be put on Sikhism because Guru Granth Sahib strongly condemns prudery, prurience, lasciviousness, and the acts of the Sakats.

9.3 Meeri Peeri in modern times

It is an acknowledged fact that the Freedom of India from the British in the 20th century was inspired by the ideals of Guru Gobind Singh and the contribution of his followers in the Freedom struggle was much greater than their numerical strength would demand. Rabinder Nath Tagore fanned this inspiration by writing poems on the valour of Banda Singh and Guru Gobind Singh. It was the magic of his poems in Bengali language, which was instrumental in bringing together the Bengali and Panjabi Freedom fighters on one stage.

Modern concept of secularism with the legislation for ballot, conflicts with Meeri Peeri. These days the power of Meeri of a country stems from the votes rather than from any spiritual acumen of its citizens. All kinds of ills, misdemeanours and illegal practices are camouflaged and declared fair if only the ballot box is full. The box then dictates how religion

302 फिकट बृहद्धर्म एवं अल्पदर्म युक्त (अल्पदर्म ईवी) बृहद्धर्म ईवी युक्त (अल्पदर्म ईवी) बृहद्धर्म ईवी युक्त (अल्पदर्म ईवी)
303 जसीई सत्संह एवं गोविंद गीतिसंग कविता (पंचक वनं) सत्संह गीतिसंग कविता (पंचक वनं)

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should behave in the context of a fake secular state. Encroachment in religion has therefore become the prerogative of the politician who has the resources and the power to manipulate things to his advantage. Modern day misdirected power (Shakti) is smothering bhakti (spirituality) under the jackboots of phoney and counterfeit secularism.
Chapter Ten
Caste

The Indian caste system (Varan Ashram Dharma) is usually explained by saying that at some time in the history of India the society was divided on the basis of nature of work each person was assigned to do. This was essentially a division of labour regardless of status. Later this practical division became rigid. However the impression one gets from reading the Vedas is that it is in fact the remnant of the high-handed sovereignty of the Aryans upon the indigenous inhabitants of India. The victorious Aryans hated the vanquished locals and reduced them to servants and menial workers. They enforced Varan Ashram Dharma right from the time of the Vedas. Later it was meticulously supported, sustained, nurtured and developed through the Puranas and the Simirities of the Hindu religion.

Over the period of time the upper classes (Brahmans and Kashatryas- both Aryans) assumed dignity, shunned labour, became respectable, and even

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304 Strictly speaking Caste is different from Varan Ashram (colour prejudice). It is a Portuguese word meaning ‘Social division’. However in India Varan Ashram Dharma slowly degenerated into caste system and was applied rigidly by associating caste with profession and birth. Thus it became a schism of the soul.

305 The Aryans brought colour (later caste) prejudice with them and it is also mentioned in the Avesta literature of the Aryans. The Iranian Aryans were divided into Atharvas, Rathestas, Vastrias, and Huiti. See also Purusha Sukta of Rig Veda. Later we find Tulsi Das writing, “मून शक्ति मून शक्ति मून शक्ति” (मून शक्ति फिरक्काँ शक्ति शक्ति को पृथि ने जा ते जूत जूत जूत जूत) Also see Gita XV, II- 47 and read “Were castes formulated in the age of Rig Veda?” by V.M. Apte.

306 Such was the hatred with low castes that they lived outside towns and had to drag a bush behind them or ring a bell to indicate their low status. Even in the times of the Peshwas the Mahars of Poona were not permitted to enter the town after 3. PM lest their long shadow defiles the upper classes. Caste was considered to be inalienably associated with birth. No one was allowed to change his/her caste. It is said that once a Kashatrya king (Wishvamitra) requested Vashishta to permit his entry into Brahmanism. The request was spurned. Later Wishvamitra approached Brahma and again expressed his desire to abjure Kashatrya caste and become a Brahman. Even Brahma declined to accept his request.
worshipful but the downtrodden lower classes turned into labourers. The upper classes became richer and richer without doing work whereas the lower working classes became poorer and poorer in spite of backbreaking hard labour. The dignity of labour was thus completely lost. To add insult to injury all this was associated with religion and the lower classes were forbidden from reading religious books or visiting Hindu temples. They were supposed only to obey the Brahman who interpreted the scripture for them. Such was the deep-rooted effect of caste prejudices that as late as the seventeenth century AD a Brahman is said to have declined to anoint the nationalist leader Shiva ji as a ruler just because the latter belonged to a lower caste.

At the time of Guru Nanak (1469-1539 AD) there were about 3000 sub-castes and four main divisions (Brahman, Kashatarya, Vaish and Shudra) in India. It had given rise to social inequality, bigotry and lack of respect for manual labour. This well-established Chakarvyuh (Maiz) was difficult to break. Even the low castes themselves had psychologically succumbed to it and did not dare to oppose it. They were fully satisfied with remaining in their caste and working as serfs. Rigid enforcement of caste hierarchy also resulted in restrictions on connubium and convivial associations, which were enforced by unwritten law.

Mr. McLoed complains that the Sikh Gurus claimed to have abolished caste system but they did so only in the religious sphere and left out the society. It should be clear that Guru Nanak started the process of abolishing caste differences through preaching and through Sangat (free association) and Pangat (inter-dining) institutions.

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307 Ram Chandra killed a shudra named Shambhook because the latter was praying to God. “In its social doctrine, the Gita was not egalitarian, but staunchly attached to the caste system, and to it only the Brahman and the Kashatrya were noble by birth.” (Hindusim’ by Niradh Chaudhri Page 266).

308 Shiva Ji had to arrange Yagyas for 4 months and feed 11000 Brahmans before he could be anointed. It is said that he spent 50 Lakh of rupees just to earn the right to be anointed as a ruler. Some writers estimate it to be Rs. 700.000000 (Read The menace of Hindu imperialism by D.J Maharaj page 166).

309 McLeod is tarnishing Sikhism by design because he has been a Christian Missionary in the Panjab. He feels that Christianity can take root among the Sikhs only if Sikhism is disparaged and undermined. McLeod basis most of his criticism of Sikhism on the available biography of Guru Nanak which, we all know, is legendary and full of myths. Besides biographies (Janam Sakhis) were not written by the Gurus and neither was any of them approved by any Sikh Guru as a correct record of events.
Later the Khalsa was a logical culmination of it when Guru Gobind Singh finally swept caste aside from the Indian Society by offering *Amrit to all castes* from the same bowl.

“Prior to the time of the Sikh Gurus, no general ever conceived the idea of raising an army from men, who were believed to be unclean and polluted from their birth; but the watchword and war-cry of the Sikhs, Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh, and the stimulating precepts of the tenth Guru, altered what had hitherto been deemed dregs of humanity into warriors whose prowess and loyalty never failed their leaders” (M.A. Macauliffe Vol.v P.93).

The Khalsa stood for a casteless society but the pernicious elements of the caste, which had gone deep into the psyche of the Indians, were difficult to root out completely. Soon after Guru Gobind Singh’s death the Sikhs reverted to the jungles and the caste system raised its head again under the influence of the Brahmans who had taken over the Sikh religious places. They distorted and misrepresented the tenets of Sikhism since there was nobody to counteract their nefarious designs.

### 10.1 What the Gurus did to oppose caste prejudice

Guru Nanak clearly identified himself with the lowliest of the low and denounced those who paraded pride in their caste. He said, “*Worthless is the caste and worthless an exalted name. For all mankind there is but a single refuge*.” At the pain of excommunication he even declared openly that he would associate with the so-called low castes and not play a second fiddle to the affluent and socially pampered magnates.

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310 *hmw dr Xk mzhb rw AwieMd ik dueI Az imAW brKy zd [ v hr chwr vrn kOim hnUd Az bRhmn v CqrI v SUdr v vYS ik hr Xk rw dr-D rm Swsqr dIny Alihdw muk`rr Asq [  AW rw qrk dwdh v br Xk qrIk sLUk numwieMd [*](Secret report of Munshi Ghulam Muhay- ud-din to Aurangzeb, the Emperor of Delhi).*

311 Such has been the influence of Hinduism that the Indian Muslims, who are forbidden caste differences, became divided into castes like Sayed, Mughal, Sheikh and Pathan on the pattern of four vernas of Hinduism (A.K.Najmal “Changing Society in India and Pakistan”) At present there are 35 separate castes of Muslims alone in Bengal. In his book “Census of India” (page 380) Even Indian Christians could not escape it. Mr.J.H.Hutton writes, “Caste is admittedly observed by the Catholics while some Protestants, who prefer not to admit it, openly admit a ban on commensality.”

312 *Rahv kSwh kpu vwrP [Hkko sAv [ kSuR kSwh pSW ko sAv swh sAv swh s
To give credence to his statements he befriended the so-called lowest caste Mardana all through his life.

To expose those who advanced the argument that in the next life God will offer better place to the higher castes, the Guru said that in the court of God neither caste nor power is of any value. He dissociated caste from birth and said that the caste of a person should be associated with the person’s deeds and not with his birth. Fully stated his advice runs as follows: "Do not be proud of your caste. Only those can claim to be superior who attune to God. You will be a fool to boast of your high caste because such claims result in many problems. Like a potter fashioning earthen pots in numerous shapes our father God has fashioned us from one and the same clay. All living beings are composed of five elements no one can prove any disparity between human constituents. Nanak says human beings are rewarded for their deeds and without the guidance of a true Guru, they do not stand to get the chance of being liberated from wrong notions."

The Guru tolerated the profession-based tags but repudiated the social superiority or inferiority attached to professions. He said classification of caste should be based on deeds instead of profession or birth. A bad deed should bring bad name to the doer. For example “A greedy person is a dog; and a person full of falsehood should be called a filthy street sweeper (Sعوده). Cheating (غلظ) of others is putting the filth of others into your own mouth (حلف). The fire of anger is the outcaste (مَجیر) who burns dead bodies at the crematorium”. According to the Gurus a man can be a tailor, a barber, a farmer, a cobbler and still be equal in social status with a Brahman whereas a Brahman who is doing evil deeds is lower in status than a God-fearing street-sweeper.

And the Brahmans who cheated others and in so doing sucked their blood were butchers.
Entry into Sikhism was open to all from the time of Guru Nanak. Hymns of the writers from all castes appear in the Granth Sahib. After Guru Nanak and Guru Angad Dev, who enforced convivial dining through persuasion, Guru Amar Das specifically disallowed visitors unless they dined in his Langar sitting with all other castes. This compulsory commensality brought people of different castes together as equals. Later Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Ram Das also condemned caste. Bhai Gurdas mentions that the Karah Parsad offered by the so-called low castes and the outcastes was freely distributed to all irrespective of their castes.319

Mehma Parkash tells us that Guru Angad Dev treated all castes equally. Similarly Koer Singh tells us that Shudras and low-castes all ate together in the Guru’s gatherings. Rattan Singh Bhangu clearly mentions that Ranghrettas (sweepers) were treated by Guru Gobind Singh in the same way as the other castes.320 Amrit (baptism) was not denied to anybody by Guru Gobind Singh. His five beloved ones all came from the so-called low castes. They even included a low caste barber and a washer man who were socially ostracized in those days. Kesar Singh Chhibber writes that the Khalsa obliterated the distinctions of caste and inter-married. Bhai Dya Singh’s Rehat Nama states that Guru Gobind Singh strictly forbade the mention of caste.321

Discrimination and social stratification on the basis of vertical relationships was unacceptable to the Gurus. They did not accept vertical caste divisions with Brahman at the apex of the pyramid-down to sweepers and leather-workers. This explains why there are not many Brahman Sikhs in the Khalsa brotherhood. However they tolerated horizontal links of castes, which were unjustifiably and wrongly associated with professions. Professions in India have always had long ancestral links. If a person followed the profession of his forefathers he would become an expert in that profession or trade. Unfortunately when it came to matrimonial alliances the people always sought the best person in

319 Bhai Gurdas has criticised caste at various places in his vars. Read Bhai Gurdas’s writings in vrs 3 (p 16), vrs 5 (p 1), vrs 9 (p 1), vrs 12 (p 17), vrs 18 (p 14), vrs 29 (p 5).

320 See also Panth Parkash by Giani Gian Singh.

321 See also Panth Parkash by Giani Gian Singh.
their professions to keep the expertise going and to ensure good standard of living for their children. This resulted in prolonging the profession-based caste system and is still the cause of its existence. However for the Sikhs such caste phenomena are not the cause of social ostracism and hatred.

Since the Hindu Shastras preached caste discrimination, the Sikh Gurus rejected the Hindu scripture and the Hindu gods.\textsuperscript{322} In the Guru’s concept of religion there was no place for the so-called four \textit{Varnas}. The prince and the pauper became one and came to be regarded with equal respect.

10.2 Caste today

Patterns of connubium, patriarchal values and social structures take a long time to change. Such is the impact of caste in India that even in our own times it openly exists everywhere.\textsuperscript{323} The prominent Hindu reformer Vivekananda once said, “If untouchability lives, Hinduism will die.” Mahatma Gandhi\textsuperscript{324} too condemned it but the malady still persists in spite of the efforts of our national Government in curbing all sorts of discrimination and bias. Connubium and commensality restrictions that we see today are especially noticeable in the villages. It is a heritage from the remotest past social customs, which had gone deep into the psyche of the village people. Other reasons for their survival are conservative Hindu influence, lack of education and inertia.

\textsuperscript{322} महात्मा गांधी ने लव के वेत (पृष्ठ 848), उन के स्वयं तत्व चेतके वेत (पृष्ठ 258), भूमिका निंगन मनचे प्रजादेवी है आदित (पृष्ठ 848)

\textsuperscript{323} “सरकार अभी ने जाकर भी स्त्री भारती ने अवलोकन अवलोकन द एक दे शे अंतिम दही भूमि भारत देवक बंधक बंधक रोक दें गंगा रोक दें गंगा विद्यान वह रेवा रेवा,आग रेवा आग रेवा। रेवा दे रेवा अभी अभी अभी अभी। वे निंगन जाकर बंधक एक नींव बंधक बंधक बंधक” (पृष्ठ 13 जुलाई 1936)

\textsuperscript{324} Mahatma Gandhi simply gave a new name to the low castes. He called them “Harijan”. He neither attacked the Hindu scripture, which sanctioned caste nor campaigned to admit low caste in Hindu Temples much less dining with them or entering into matrimonial alliances. Harijan is still considered a low caste.
10.3 The Gurus accused

A question is usually raised as to why were all the Gurus married only in the Khatri castes in spite of their opposition to caste prejudices? “It should be remembered that the Gurus arranged marriages of their own children which were in complete conformity with traditional caste prescription. Does it not follow therefore that their strictures on caste have been partially misunderstood?” (‘The Sikhs’ by McLeod page 81).

The answer to this question should be clear from the foregoing discussion. Any attempt by the Guru to discredit the current Hindu dogmas would have resulted in arresting the progress of the Sikh Movement. The aim was to strengthen the movement, which would in turn automatically obliterate caste prejudices.

It is also a fact that the Sikh Gurus did not oppose inter-caste marriages. There is no evidence to show that Guru Nanak, or the later Sikh Gurus at any time objected to inter-caste marriages but they themselves did not take any such steps because this would have affected their movement adversely and sounded its death knell at the very start. It was far more important to organise people for a fight against religious and political oppression and persecution than to invite unnecessary criticism of caste dilution. People were being pulverised between the two stools of exploitation by the religious elite and the persecution by the political stalwarts. It was the attack on these maladies that became the recruiting ground for the Sikhs. It was understood that once people join to oppose these two enemies their caste-endogamy, caste-status and ritualistic barriers would automatically fade away in the course of time.

Secondly the system of contracting matrimonial alliances in the Guru’s time left very little for the parents (much less for the individuals) to decide. Intermediaries known as Wicholas (usually barbers) were the key figures to decide matrimonial alliances. The story of Guru Hargobind’s betrothal demonstrates how the intermediaries (Wicholas) contracted matrimonial alliances. These Wicholas were usually Hindus in thought.

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325 “He jests at scars who hasn’t felt a wound” (Shakespeare). McLeod does not know how caste was enforced and to what extent it had devastated the Indian Society. It may take generations for the crows to become white.

326 “Never can true reconcilement grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep” (Milton in Paradise lost)
and belief and could not think of breaking the caste prejudices without inviting problems.

It should also be kept in mind that the first four Gurus were already married before they became Gurus. At the time of the fifth Guru political situation changed suddenly leading to Guru Arjan’s martyrdom and Guru Har Gobind’s battles. There was no time for social reform when even their lives were at stake. The situation improved only for a few years and then again worsened with the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Later Guru Gobind Singh thought out a novel plan to strike at the root of the disease and succeeded to a large extent. All his five Pyaras were from the so-called lower classes. He demonstrably accepted Amrit from them.

It is easy to find fault with Sikhism but the fact remains that caste had gone too deep into the Indian psyche. Even in the 21st century India legislation is proving fruitless to curb it.

10.4 Contribution of Sikhism

There is no denying the fact that the spirit of social equality and brotherhood that exists in the Panjab and its contiguous areas today is the result of the reinforcement of Sikh ideals by the Khalsa. It is also a fact that the Khalsa drew leaders from all sections of Society including the so-called low castes and outcastes. Caste prejudices were abolished as far as commensality was concerned and by doing so the Sikh revolution raised the social status of the so-called lower classes. There is no denying the fact that even though caste differences persist, the Sikh society is much more liberal and egalitarian than the prevalent Hindu social order of modern India.

“It was reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform, and to lay the broad foundations which enabled his successor Govind to fire the minds of his countrymen with a new nationality, and to give practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes.” (J.D Cunningham ‘A history of the Sikhs’ Page 34)

He (Guru Nanak) was the essence of humility. He preached with vehemence against idolatry, hypocrisy and distinctions of castes and creeds, but in so doing he never uttered a word, which savoured of personal ambition, neither did he arrogate to himself the attributes of God. (Glimpses of world religion)
10.5 Gotras

Gotras are tribal associations. At one time groups or tribes of people fighting with each other created congeries of small states or principalities, which dominated the society. Usually the leaders’ name was given to the group, which in course of time began to be called a Gotra. For example Sidhu s/o Khiwa Rao was the founder of Sidhu Gotra. In his tenth generation appeared Brar s/o Hameera who was a great warrior and had defeated Muhammad Tughlak. Those who joined his group began to be called Brar. Maan Gotra came to be known after the name of Raja Binepal’s grandson Manpal, who founded the town of Mansa. Randhawas are the descendants of the ninth son of Rai Jundhar whereas Chhinias are the descendants of his eleventh son. Rais are descendants of Tulsi Das’s son Rai. Bajwas descend from Shilkap’s son Kals who was known as Bajanwala because he used to rear falcons (Baj). These leaders attracted people of all professions and castes into their groups. Therefore it is not uncommon to find so many castes professing the same Gotra. For example Cheemas are jats, barbers and even Muslims. Gillis are jats, carpenters and Mazhabi Sikhs. Dhillons are Jats, carpenters and barbers.

Some people have confused Gotra with caste. Gotra has nothing to do with caste. Caste (Zat) is endogamous (includes different Gotras) but Gotra is exogamous (excludes people of other Gotras although of the same caste). The Panjabi jats have more than a hundred gotras but only one caste (Jat).

Sometimes people who distinguished themselves in religious or other fields also lent their names to tribes as Gotras. For example Bhai Mansukh was a devoted Sikh of Guru Nanak. He went to Ceylon to preach Sikhism. Now we have the word Mansukhani used as a Gotra by his descendants. It is said that Mehmood Gazhnavi captured a Surjvanshi Rajpoot man and took him away to Ghazni as a slave. The man was a good warrior and runner who could run for miles without getting out of breath.

327 See Tawirkh Rajgan Panjab Page 13
328 See T万irkh Raj Khalsa page 123
329 Bajwas descended from Baju Rajpoots of Jaisalmer. Baba Manga was the first to move to the Panjab and settle at Bajwat (District Sialkot-Pakistan. His descendant Shilkap (also known as Raja Sahib) ruled in Multan. Sikander Lodhi drove him out of Multan. He had two sons Kals and Les. Kals escaped in the guise of a falconer and Les was killed. Pakistani Bajwas live in Sialkot and Narowal and those in India live in District Gurdaspur settled around Dera Baba Nanak.
330 Vedis are said to have descended from those who memorised the Vedas.
He escaped from Ghazni, ran back to the Panjab, and settled on the banks of river Ravi. After his accomplishment he and his group came to be known as Sahi (long breather). Now this marvellous quality attached with his name is used as a Gotra. Hari Singh Nalwa came to be called Nalwa because he killed a lion. 332 Ramgarhia is not a caste or a gotra but Jassa Singh came to be known as Ramgarhia because of his association with the fort of Ram Rauni (later Ram Garh).

Sometimes place names are adopted as Gotras. An important personality popularises the name of a place, which later becomes a Gotra. Sham Singh was Sidhu by gotra but came to be known as Sham Singh Attari because he founded the village of Attari. Now ‘Attariwala’ is used as a Gotra. Ahluwalia (or Walia) Gotra started with Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia who belonged to village Ahluwal. Partap Singh Kairon was a Dhillon Jat of village Kairon but now his descendants use Kairon as Gotra after their names. Parkash Singh Badal belongs to village Badal and now his son and other descendants call themselves Badal. Sant Sunder Singh lived in village Bhinder and came to be known as Bhindranwale. His descendant Sant Jarnail Singh came to be known as Bhindranwale even though he had no connection with village Bhindran. Rara is a village but we know about Sant Ihsar Singh Rarewale and Gian Singh Rarewala.

There are villages and towns founded by different Gotras and people use the name of the village after their names irrespective of their real Gotra. For example Sidhwan (from Sidhu), Sivian (from Sivia), Chak Bhatian (from Bhati), Lalian (from Lalli), and Sohian (from Sohi). Chahal, Gill, Khanna, Goraya, Ghuman, Sanghera, Dhillwan, Cheema, Kang, Hayer, Sandhwan etc are all the names of the villages in the Panjab where people of these Gotras originally settled or established their small areas of influence. Many people use the name of their village with their names rather than their Gotra. ‘Nehru’ was not a Gotra but a place name.

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332 Hari Singh (1791-1837AD) son of Sardar Gurdial Singh of Gujranwala joined Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s army in 1805 AD as an ordinary soldier. In 1710 he accompanied the Maharaja on a hunting trip. A lion unexpectedly attacked him. Hari Singh held the lion by his jaws and threw him on the ground. Before the lion could get up he drew his sword and decapitated it. The Maharaja was so pleased with his bravery that he appointed him as his own bodyguard and later appointed him the Commander of Sherdil Regiment, which had 800 horsemen. Hari Singh later became the world-famous general and one of the strongest pillars of the Khalsa Raj. He became famous as Nalwa (the brave, the lion killer).
The Indian society of the Guru’s time was strongly hierarchical. Each Gotra of a particular Zat (caste) had some Gotras preferred for matrimonial alliances and some others even banned.333 The Sikh Gurus denounced the privileges or the deprivations attached to hierarchical patterns. No discrimination was made in appointing Masands (preachers) from various castes and Gotras.

Castes and Gotras have both found mention in the Guru Granth Sahib but they are not used derogatively.334 They have also been extensively used by Bhai Gurdas in his Vars with the names of Guru Nanak’s followers.335 Janam Sahkis too used Gotras and Zats. Guru Nanak’s discussion with Ajita Randhawa is very popular. In Bachittar Natak we find “Guru Nanak was born in the Bedi clan”.336

What the Gurus condemned was not the profession-based caste or the Gotra but the discrimination attached to them and their association with birth. The castes attached to professions cannot be obliterated. We cannot call the barbers, farmers, teachers, weavers, and cobblers by other names and still identify their professions. Whatever other names are given to them, the other names will still betray their profession. The Sikh Gurus nowhere wrote that the Sikhs should not use Gotras and Zats (castes). Those who attribute this to Sikhism are unintentionally trying to introduce their own prejudices into Sikhism. What the Gurus preached was the abolition of a person’s Zat’s (caste’s) association with his/her birth and the hatred due to such labels. According to Sikhism no one is inferior or superior because of ones caste, profession or Gotra.

333 People still say “isDU sMDU ieko ijhy ig`l zrw aucyry”
334 (1) राने आईसू विदॉत । विदॉत । उर्वर मेरो गुरु गुरु । (गृ: 62) । राने विदॉत । विदॉत । महर देव संग्रह की गुर। (प्रति 55) । राने विदॉत । विदॉत । अपनी अछुल्ली विदॉत । (प्रति 83) । (2) जिसे अल्लाह कुटौड़ी देखे देवी देवी देवी देवी देवी देवी देवी देवी देवी (प्रति 928) । जिसे विदॉत । विदॉत । (3) विदॉत । विदॉत । विदॉत । विदॉत । (प्रति 50) ।
335 Bhai Gurdas gives us names of Guru Nanak’s devotees in War 11 Pauri 14 and the names of Guru Angad Dev’s devotees in war 11 Pauri 15. He frequently mentions their castes and gotras. For example, मैंशैलिंग विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.16) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.17) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.18) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.19) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.20) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.21) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.22) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.23) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.24) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.25) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.26) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.27) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.28) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.29) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.30) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.31) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.32) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.33) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.34) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.35) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.36) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु । (B: cii 10.37) विविद्ध गुरु गुरु ।
Chapter Eleven
Sikh to Khalsa

The words ‘Sikh’ and ‘Singh’ have been in use in India since the seventh century but their meanings have changed a lot over time. The word ‘Khalsa’ appears to have come into use only after the twelfth century with the coming of the Muslims.

11.1 Sikh

‘Sikh’ is a word of the “Pali” language and was extensively used in ancient Buddhist literature for a person who is perfect. Some scholars think that it is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘Shishya’, which means ‘a learner, a follower or a student’. It was commonly used in the religious parlance in the sense of a follower. For example we read, “Influenced by the glorious reputation of Kabir the second person to become his Sikh was Sain, the barber”. In the 14th and the 15th cantos of his Var 11 Bhai Gurdas has listed a number of people as the Sikhs of Guru Nanak. The people mentioned by Bhai Gurdas were not ordinary people who assembled to listen to the Guru and yet did not accept his philosophy of life. They were completely drenched in the Guru’s philosophy and followed his advice in all matters. Some such Sikhs were later appointed Masands by Guru Amar Das on the basis of their spiritual achievements. Also it should be noted that there was no distinction of caste, colour, or social status among followers of the Gurus. All followers, especially the Masands, preached Sikhism and collected funds for the Guru’s movement.

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337 शिख शिक्षित इस्लामी धार्मिक शिक्षित और एक शिक्षक। शिख उसकी योग्यता के आधार पर किया गया था।
338 “मूसलमान मुल्यांकन अर्थात शिख ने खुद सेवा की” They were both followers of Bhagat Rama Nand.
339 विषय भौगोलिक रूप से शिख विश्व झारखंड से शिख खाने, पुरुष तथा महिला देश तथा शिख भारतीय।
340 Those who started coming to the Guru simply on persuasion but were not fully committed to the Guru’s philosophy were called “Sehlangs” (सेहलंग्स). राजनीतिक रूप से अवरोंके हस्तीसे हो तथा संवेदनशील, राजनीतिक कुप्तकृत में से संवेदनशील अवरोंके संबंध में राजनीतिक दंड दिए जाने (यहां तक कि जुलाई 1698) By the time of Guru Gobind Singh the Masands had become corrupt and were a drag on the movement so Guru Gobind Singh had to discontinue the appointment of the Masands in 1698 AD.
Guru Amar Das gave the first definition of a Sikh when he wrote “Renouncing selfishness and conceit, he remains always on the side of the Guru; he does not follow anyone except the Guru. Says Nanak, listen, O Saints: such a Sikh turns toward the Guru with sincere faith, and becomes Sunmukh (blessed).”

“He alone is a Sikh, a friend, a relative and a sibling, who walks in the Way of the Guru’s Will. One who walks according to his own will, O Siblings of Destiny, suffers separation from the Lord, and shall degenerate.” (M3 Page 601)

“One who calls himself a Sikh of the True Guru, shall rise in the early morning hours and meditate on the Lord’s Name”. (M4 page 305)

“Blessed, blessed is that Sikh of the Guru, who humbly submits to the Guru’s instruction. Blessed, blessed is that Sikh of the Guru, who with his tongue utters the Name of the Lord. Blessed, blessed is that Sikh of the Guru, whose mind, upon hearing the Lord’s Name, becomes blissful. Blessed, blessed is that Sikh of the Guru, who acts upon the advice of the True Guru, and so obtains the Lord’s Name. I bow forever in deepest respect to that Sikh who practises what the Guru preaches.”(AGGS Page 593).

Obviously a Sikh is somebody who keeps God in mind at all times, renounces his self-conceit, and acts according to the Guru’s instruction. His submission to the Guru elevates him to spiritual bliss.

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341 अभ्यं बठें सत्स वर्ण वर्णरूप लूटु विगृह अवसू न लतै बेलों। वर्ण वर्ण चतुराव में बिगृह समुष्ट केले। (M3 Page 50)
342 में बिगृह नाम सेवान ने लहरी से लहरी बिगृह अवसू में लहरी हारे। (M3 Page 69)
343 बिगृह जागतिक कर में बिगृह अवसू से जागतिक हरे वर्ण नामकरण.... (M3 Page 80)
344 जागतिक कर हरे वर्ण नामकरण से जागतिक वर्ण नामकरण........... (M3 Page 95)

107
11.2 Singh

It is generally believed that when Guru Gobind Singh initiated his Sikhs in 1699 AD he invented the words “Singh” and “Khalsa”. The word “Khalsa” was assigned to the baptised Sikhs who became “Singhs” after partaking baptism\(^{345}\) of the sword. The fact however remains that the word “Singh” (lion) was current among the people of India much earlier than the time of Guru Gobind Singh. The Buddhists had used it in their scripture and the Rajputs had used it after their names. For example King Akbar’s brother-in-law (maternal uncle of Jehangir) was Raja Maan Singh, whose sister Jodha Bai, was Akbar’s wife. Guru Gobind Singh simply reserved its use for the baptised Sikhs who repudiated caste system, opted to take Pahul and regularly practised Sikhism in their daily lives. Today the usage of “Singh” after people’s names is not a reflection of their true commitment to the Guru’s way but an extant tradition. Such people go to the Sikh religious gatherings but they are not truly “Singhs” in the real sense of the term “Singh” unless they are awakened by Gurbani and make a sincere public commitment to the Guru by getting baptised.

11.3 Khalsa

The word “Khalsa” is derived from the Arabic word “Khalas” which means pure (without adulteration). Bhagat Kabir used this word as such for people “pure at heart” and devoted to God. He wrote, “Kabir says that those who delved into Divine love are the Purest of the pure.”\(^{346}\) Bhagat Ravi Das used it in the sense of spiritual purification when he wrote, “The purified cobbler Ravi Das says this”\(^{347}\)

\(^{345}\) This word (baptism) has different connotations in Christianity. It has been used here for Amrit Sanchar ceremony of the Sikhs for convenience only because no other suitable equivalent is available in English.

\(^{346}\) “कबीर कहते हैं जैसे भगवान प्रेम तो अपना न फांदे” (पंजाबी 648)

\(^{347}\) “रवि दास कोटम गला फांदा”। “जिसमें संपूर्ण कौटर में खड़ा हो वैदिक”. (पंजाबी 734)
Dadu and Bairagis also used this word for their institutions. Some of their Akharas (Institutions) were known as Bhai Khalsa, Nirmohi Khalsa, Nirbani Khalsa and Niranjani Khalsa etc. Later Guru Arjan Dev used this word when he wrote, “Those who join the company of the Saints, get purified and enter God’s court as emancipated men”.

The word “Khalsa” was commonly used by the Mughals before the time of Guru Har Gobind for any properties that belonged directly to the king. We still come across villages like Dera Khalsa, Thoha Khalsa, Choha Khalsa, and Paddi Khalsa, which once belonged to the kings as their personal properties. Guru Har Gobind used the word in this sense in one of his Hukam Namas and wrote, “The holy congregation of the East, is the Guru’s Khalsa”. These Hukam Namas contained lists of names prior to the use of this word “Khalsa”. Obviously not everybody was “Khalsa”. This indicates that only those who towed the Guru’s line were termed Khalsa.

Guru Tegh Bahadur used the word exactly in the same sense when he wrote to the Holy congregation of Patna.

Even before the Baisakhi event of 1699AD Guru Gobind Singh called his devoted Sikhs ‘Khalsa’. For example in his Hukam Nama written to Kalyan Rai and Sangat of Machhiwara in 1698 AD he writes, “The congregation is my Khalsa”. This means that even before Amrit Sanchar the Guru chose very trustworthy people who would lay down their lives for him and it was an honour for such chosen followers to be called ‘Khalsa’.

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348 Dadu (1544-1603 AD) son of Lodhi Ram Nagar was born in Ahmedabad in a Muslim family. At the age of eleven he became the follower of Pandit Bodhan. He preached his faith in Rajasthan and was known as Dadu Dyal (Dadu the merciful).

349 “Those who join the company of the Saints, get purified and enter God’s court as emancipated men”.

350 Guru Har Gobind issued this Hukanama at the time of creating the Akal Takhat. One Hukam Nama of Baba Gurdita (son of Guru Hargobind) is also available. Hukam Namas have been published by Sardar Ganda Singh. Later Sardar Shamsher Singh Ashok published them through the SGPC in 1967 naming them “Nishan te Hukamnamey”.

351 For example “चतुर्विंशति क्रमश गुरुदेव क्रमश गुरुदेव क्रमश गुरुदेव क्रमश गुरुदेव” ......." (Hukam Nama SmSyr ASok Pnwy 15)

352 “चतुर्विंशति क्रमश गुरुदेव क्रमश गुरुदेव क्रमश गुरुदेव” ....... (Hukam Nama SmSyr ASok Pnwy 27)
It is therefore clear that Guru Gobind Singh used the word Khalsa to denote all those trustworthy Sikhs who pledged their heads to him and promised to lay down their lives when required. Later the word was reserved for the baptised Sikhs who had openly pledged their allegiance to the Guru and offered their heads at the Amrit Sanchar ceremony of 1699 AD.

These baptised Sikhs were deeply devoted to the Guru and believed in no other deity except God.353 The Guru is reported to have said that he was merging his soul in the Khalsa.354 The Khalsa’s life, therefore, was not their own but the property of the Sire (Guru Gobind Singh) whom they always called Sacha Patshah (The real ruler).

Even after the Amrit Sanchar ceremony only the most trustworthy and spiritually advanced close associates of the Guru were called the Khalsa. For example see Hukam Nama No. 83 (1702 AD) written to Mehar Chand and Hukam Nama No. 86 written to Mehar Chand and Karam Chand in 1701 AD. Although not baptised they are called Khalsa.

After the demise of Guru Gobind Singh Matta Sundri and Matta Sahib Kaur wrote letters to their followers exactly in the same fashion by mentioning their names but made a very significant change in their Hukam Namas. They never wrote “ਦੁਨੀ ਔਰ ਿਲਾਸ਼ ਜੋ ਜਾ ਸਟਕ ਹੈ” Instead after the list of the devotees’ names or some times even before it they wrote,

“ਮੀ ਅਲਾਚ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸੀ ਕ ਆਲਰਸਾ ਦਿਨੀ ਘਟੋਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਸੂਰ ਬਬਰ ਵਾਲੇ (ਗੁਰਬਾਲੇ ਸੀ ਇਕ ਆਲਰਸਾ ਮੰਨੀ 1722 AD)
ਮੀ ਅਲਾਚ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸੀ ਕ ਆਲਰਸਾ ਮੀ ਆਲਰਸਾ ਸਲਵਿਆ ਦੇਖੋ ਸੀ ਸੀ ਆਲਰਸਾ ਜਾਂ…” (ਗੁਰਬਾਲੇ ਮਨਮੋਹਨ ਸਿਖ ਆਲਰਸਾ ਪਣ ਪੰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ).

This testifies to the fact that the Khalsa always belonged to Akal Purkh (God) pledging their devotion to Him through the Guru’s word (Shabad).

Letters written by Baba Banda Bahadur are also written in the same style. For example read the letter dated 12 Poh (December) 1710 AD and now in the possession of Delhi Gurdwara Parabandhak Committee.355

353 “ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸੀ ਦਨ ਦੇ ਉਹ ਖਾਸ ਜੋਤੇ ਸਾਹਸਨ ਮੰਨੀ”
354 “ਕੁਝ ਖਾਸ ਖਾਸ ਕਰ ਕੀ ਆਚਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸੀ ਦਨ ਦੇ ਉਹ ਖਾਸ ਜੋਤੇ ਸਾਹਸਨ ਮੰਨੀ”
355 “ਕੁਝ ਖਾਸ ਖਾਸ ਕਰ ਕੀ ਆਚਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸੀ ਦਨ ਦੇ ਉਹ ਖਾਸ ਜੋਤੇ ਸਾਹਸਨ ਮੰਨੀ”
356 “ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸੀ ਦਨ ਦੇ ਉਹ ਖਾਸ ਜੋਤੇ ਸਾਹਸਨ ਮੰਨੀ”
357 “ਕੁਝ ਖਾਸ ਖਾਸ ਕਰ ਕੀ ਆਚਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸੀ ਦਨ ਦੇ ਉਹ ਖਾਸ ਜੋਤੇ ਸਾਹਸਨ ਮੰਨੀ”
When we pray and say, “जहाँ जहाँ धर्मस्थल ती समाधिव उधार उधार विनियमति।
पंख की लीड” we mean wherever Guru Nanak’s Panth (all devoted and
dedicated followers whether baptised or un-baptised) live they should
enjoy the protection of the Khalsa among them. The Panth (The followers
of the path delineated by Guru Nanak) should flourish everywhere.

Bhai Gurdas (second) was of the opinion that the Guru turned the
members of his Holy congregation into the Khalsa but woe betides us if
we still remain Mannmukh.356

According to Gupta, the word Khalsa (the followers of the Sikh Gurus) is
composed of five meaningful words of Persio-Arabic script

\[
\begin{align*}
Khe & \text{ stands for Khud} & \text{(independence of spirit)} \\
Alif & \text{ stands for Allah (Akal Purkh)} & \text{(staunch belief in God)} \\
Lam & \text{ stands for Labaik} & \text{(open expression of faith)} \\
Sawd & \text{ stands for Sahib} & \text{(Meeri-secular authority)} \\
He & \text{ stands for huma}^{357} & \text{(Peeri means spiritual sovereignty)}
\end{align*}
\]

During the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the term started losing its
original significance. The word began to be used for Khalsa Army and
Khalsa Raj etc, which included Muslim, Italian, and Christian Generals
not devoted to the Sikh philosophy. Today the dedication to the Guru and
the Shabad is nearly missing. These days many Sikhs are observing many
rituals hated and rejected by the Sikh Gurus and yet call themselves
Khalsa.

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356 गुर समग्र कीली लीड मनमूक्त दुहिल्य विनियमति (बेहद गुरदस दुर्गव) 
357 Huma is a legendary bird. It is believed that if it flies over somebody’s head, that somebody gets
crowned as king.
11.4 Gur Matta

A GurMatta is a resolution passed unanimously by a Sikh gathering in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, sanctified by performing an Ardas and accepted with the shout of a Jaikara. It has an ethical base and once passed is considered to be the direction given by the Guru. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha writes in his magnum opus, the Mahan Kosh that upholding the GurMatta is a bounden duty of all Sikhs and anybody who disobeys it commits a sacrilege and becomes a Tankhaya (violator or defaulter).

The word GurMatta came into use after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh to express and propagate the decisions taken democratically by the congregation. Unfortunately the word cannot be translated exactly into English. The word “Resolution,” which is usually substituted for it, is inadequate to demonstrate the spirit and the sanctity behind a GurMatta. A resolution is a Matta (मत्ता) not a GurMatta. It was the practice of the Sikhs of the 18th century to seek the sanction of the congregation before embarking on any errand. A number of Gur Mattas of the period between 1716-1763 AD are available.

Writing about the Gur Mattas Colonel Poliers states, “All chiefs, great and small and even the poorest and the most abject Siques (Sikhs) look on themselves as perfectly equal in all public concerns and in the greatest Council or in GurMatta. Gathered thus they would say, the sacred Guru Granth Sahib is between us, let us swear by our scripture to forget all internal disputes and be united.”

358 Perhaps he means “Sarbat Khalsa”, the gathering of Sikhs.
359 Perhaps he means “Sarbat Khalsa”, the gathering of Sikhs.
“For a GurMatta only those subjects can be taken up which are calculated to clarify and support the fundamental principles of Sikhism; such as safeguarding the position of the Gurus and the Holy Granth Sahib, purity of the ritual and the Panthic organisation.” (Sikh Rehat Maryada SGPC Amritsar 1978 Page 23) Five baptised Sikhs constituted a religious council and temporarily represented the body of the Guru to issue directions in a particular situation.  

Their decision was considered to have the sanction and the authority of the Guru. When the different Jathas grew bigger into Misls they felt the need to chalk out a consistent common policy. They would discuss the matter among the leaders and then present it to the council of the five. The council would then ratify the decision in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib, announce it and call it a GurMatta, which the present members of the congregation passed with a loud Jaikara. It was the corporate aspect of the GurMatta, which acted as a cement to keep the Panth united and active during the 18th century trials and tribulations when the Sikhs were hunted and hounded everywhere. It led to the cohesion of the Khalsa, resolution of internecine problems and also to a clear-cut political policy of the Sikhs. Thus the GurMatta was instrumental in maintaining the unity of thought and organisation among the different Misls and saved the Sikhs from disintegration at the worst period of their history.

To an outsider it appeared that the Sikhs were divided into twelve different confederacies engaged in internecine skirmishes but in reality they had joined together to give a practical shape to the aspirations and ideals of the Khalsa. Although religion always remained the guiding principle, the Sikh Gur Mattas covered a vast canvas of religion, politics, morality, and social justice. If the matter did not concern Sikhism and its principles then only a Matta was necessary. A Matta was not considered sacred and inviolable.

When Maharaja Ranjit Singh carved out a state, he obliterated the GurMatta system in 1809 A.D and assumed all control over religious, political and diplomatic activities of the Panth. This proved disastrous. There is no doubt that he was punctilious in worship and never missed

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361 विक्रिश्न तिवारी चृष्ण सम्पार्क अध्यायः पहली भाग (अंकों को प्रचार से ७४)
daily readings of the Granth Sahib, but it is also true that he introduced Hindu elements in Sikhism by celebrating Hindu festivals, visiting Hindu holy places and offering personal financial help to Hindu temples. Such was the influence of Hinduism on him that on his deathbed he uttered Ram Ram and four of his wives committed satī with him. In addition to this, his sexual promiscuity and addiction to bhang and liquor did a lot of damage to Sikhism. The rank and file of the Sikhs copied him and thus spread immorality among the Sikhs and it sounded the death knell of the Gur Matta tradition.

Once again during the movement for the liberation of the Gurdwaras, a number of Gur Mattas were passed. This kept the Sikhs united and determined to stick to the purpose behind the passing of the GurMatta. It is time the Sikhs revive this tradition and sort out the problems afflicting Sikhism today.
Miracles are extra normal or supernatural powers that appear to defy the laws of nature. They are unusual super physical events which un-aided reason fails to explain. Modern scientific mind proves the falsity of miracles by arguing that the supposed miraculous occurrences have been confined to ages of ignorance and superstition. Science has to a large extent annihilated the belief in the once inexplicable incidents. But science still struggles to explain the modern day abnormal, or extra normal activities of human personality demonstrated through Mesmerism, hypnotism, Telepathy, Psychoanalysis, Telekinesis, premonitions and clairvoyance. This area belongs to Psychic powers.

Miracles may be possible. Everybody has latent spiritual powers, which, if developed to a certain degree through practice and discipline, can result in acquisition of some occult powers. The Sikh Guru’s have however condemned the use of miracles to demonstrate one’s powers or to claim nearness to God through them. None of the Sikh Gurus called upon the people to have faith in Sikhism because the Gurus could work miracles. They always appealed to reason and to the listener’s mind. Self-aggrandizement, glorification or achievement of any material gains through miracles was nowhere near their heart.

362 The word miracle is derived from Muirs, which means “Wonderful”. Oxford Dictionary defines it as “Event due to Supernatural agency”. V.C Desertis defines it as “Physical action of an unseen intelligent agent producing results to which known laws are inadequate” (Psycr Philosophy P.32).

363 Science too believes that man can break the barrier of time and space and can look into past, present and the future. Man has sixth sense, which is free in time and space. (Read George Goodwin’s Science Tests Sixth Sense)

364 Though his biographers have ascribed miracles to Nanac, we never find that he pretended to work any. On the contrary he derided those who did, as deriving power from evil
Miracles abounded in Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim religious books before the advent of Sikhism. It was commonly believed that the test of Prophet hood or Sainthood was the ability to work miracles. Early Sikh writers encountered these cultures in the Punjab. We find mention of Guru Nanak’s meetings with Sufis, Buddhists, Jains, Yogis and Vaishnavas. Naturally the writers of the Gurus’ biographies were influenced by their literature, folklore and beliefs. The popular Muslim writings like Tazkra-e-Aulya by Sheikh Farid-ud-Din Attar and Kashaf-al-Mahjub by Hassan Ali Hujviri (popularly known as Data Ganj Bakhsh) were in wide circulation during the Guru period. Under the influence of such works marvels and miracles became the stock-in-trade of the Janam Sakhis as well. Many of these miracles do not agree with what the Gurbani preaches.

Some supposed Sikh miracles appear to be the copies of the stories associated with other religious leaders or Bhagats. For example Nam Dev is said to have turned the Dehura and similarly Guru Nanak is recorded as having turned the Mecca. The story is first mentioned in Tazkra-e-Aulya where Kaaba (Mecca) had moved towards Rabia Basri when she was in a forest. Prahlad was saved from fire by a miracle and similarly Guru Nanak is described as having asked a boy to enter fire and the latter came out unscathed. A snake shaded Guru Nanak but we find the same story associated with Abdullah who was sleeping in a garden and a snake provided shade to his face. After Kabir’s death Hindus and Muslims disputed as to the disposal of his body, which is said to have disappeared leaving behind some flowers. The same story is also associated with Guru Nanak.

spirits.”J.MalcolmSketch of the Sikhs”

Quran and Bible are full of miracles many of them performed by Moses. Christians define miracles as ‘infraction of laws of nature with divine intervention. The biggest miracle the Christians believe in is that Jesus Christ literally rose from the dead.

No non-Sikh historian has recorded this incident.

Read Tazkra-e-Aulya by Hakim Muhammad Urdu edition page 63. "वेंतित वालु विवाल इंस इंস
Bhai Gurdas mentions the miracles of the *Siddhas* but then tells us that Guru Nanak did not show any miracle but simply said, “I do not possess any miraculous powers or extra physical potency except the Lord’s ‘Word.’ This was the most opportune time for Guru Nanak to show a miracle and take the wind out of the *Siddha’s* sail.

It is understood that it had almost become a fashion in the 15th–16th centuries to associate miracles with religious men but the Sikh Gurus have stated it umpteen times in the Holy Granth that “*Ridhis* and *Sidhis* are powers on the palms of godmen who care little for them. Those who hanker after these occult powers go astray.” Guru Nanak mentions Babar’s invasion of India when the miracle workers tried their best to bring about Babar’s defeat and death through miracles but they failed miserably. Guru Granth Sahib does not approve miracles. It says, “Supernatural spiritual powers of the *Siddhas* are all emotional attachments. Through them, the remembrance of the Lord does not come to dwell in the mind.” His words are as follows:

“If I were to acquire supernatural powers and accumulate wealth and pleasure
And acquire the power to appear and disappear at will and thus win applause.
I would not abandon the Lord’s name because such miracles only delude the fools.”

(AGGS p.14)

The miracles recorded in the *Janam Sakhis* simply prove that the writers were not well educated and knew very little of Sikh philosophy. This is also evident from the fact that many of the Gurbani hymns quoted in these stories are nowhere to be found in the Holy Granth. Some of them are
associated with Guru Nanak but are actually the work of the later Gurus (Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, and Guru Arjan Dev). Here and there the Bani of Kabir is associated with Guru Nanak. So the incidents associated with these hymns cannot be said to belong to Guru Nanak’s period and most of them are miracles. One of the stories tells us that Guru Nanak visited the Sun. In the modern world nobody would believe such stories. Another story tells us that he walked on water. Again Guru Nanak is mentioned as having met people like Machhandar Nath, Gorakh Nath, Bharthari, Khawaja (a mythical personality) and Sheikh Farid who had lived centuries before him.

Ninety years after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, a Sikh named Sukha Singh wrote Gurbilas Patshahi 10. He wrote that after his death Guru Gobind Singh mysteriously appeared through air in the fort of Sitara and holding Bala Rai and Rustam Rai (of Janwara) by hand escaped on his horse through the air and released them on the Bindhyachal Mountain a distance of 300 miles. One wonders why the Guru did not save his own sons like this. Were Bala Rai and Rustam Rai better Sikhs (nobody knows much about them) than the Guru’s 40 valiant besieged Sikhs of Chamkaur who could be saved this way? Why did Guru Hargobind not escape from the fort of Gawalior like that? How did the writer come to know about this incident, which had not been recorded by any writer before him? Many such mythical stories have been associated with the Sikh Gurus. Such concocted stories belittle the glorious sacrifices of our Gurus and the devoted Sikhs like Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Subeg Singh, Bhai Shahbaz Singh, Bhai Mani Singh and Baba Banda Bahadur because these stories prove that they could not do what ordinary people of other religions could supposedly do. The Sikh Gurus and their followers accepted death rather than snivelling at the feet of the aggressor.376 The opposite of Miracles is Will (ਬਜਨਾਂ) and that is what the Sikh Gurus preached.

Guru Tegh Bahadur was asked to show miracles or face death. He disclaimed having any occult powers but the Mullahs insisted. Eventually the Guru said,” The only miracle that you will witness from me is that you will not be able to chop my head off (You will not be able to obliterate my ideology). 377
The Guru thus proved that the biggest miracle is the sacrifice of one’s life for a noble cause and a noble principle. He never errs who sacrifices himself.

If miracles were sanctioned by the Gurus, then Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur would surely have saved themselves from gruesome deaths and Guru Gobind Singh would not have said, “Men of God should be ashamed of showing occult powers and miracles”. He would have saved his innocent children and his mother from certain death through miracles. Guru Arjan Dev even dissuaded Mian Mir from remonstrating with the Emperor on his behalf.

History tells us that once Guru Gobind Singh was sitting with Emperor Bahadur Shah when the Mullahs (Muslim priests) challenged the Guru to show a miracle to prove his spiritual might. The Guru flatly refused. When pestered persistently the Guru said, the miracle lies on the tongue of the mighty because, “The mighty (ruler) can order the death or the release of the victim.” The chief Mullah was not satisfied and continued the argument. The Guru took out a coin from his pocket, held it aloft and said, “Look at this coin, this is the second miracle. It can buy honours and turn paupers into princes.” Still the Mullah was not satisfied and repeated the same challenge. The Guru, thereupon, unsheathed his sword and said “This is also a miracle. It can chop off a head and sniff off life”. This silenced the Mullahs and left the Emperor tongue-tied as no one was permitted to unsheathe a sword in the presence of the king.

Baba Atal and Baba Gurdita showed miracles. They had to pay with their lives. Later Ram Rai was excommunicated for showing miracles. Guru Amar Das abandoned the village of Goindwal but did not agree to bring miraculous rain.

Miracles can and do happen but true men of God never show miracles to prove their spiritual might. Dr. Radhakrishnan dissuaded religious people

378 Self-sacrifice is the real miracle out of which all the reported miracles grow. (Emerson)
379 (1) भानति ज्ञानी दैविक ध्वजयामिनी। दिनम हृद मन्त्रसे ज्ञान अभिशोषित निकृति। (2) दिनम हृद मन्त्रसे ज्ञान अभिशोषित निन्दित्ती। (3) भानति ज्ञानी दैविक ध्वजयामिनी। परम भोजन मनुष्य पुनस्परी। उद्धिति ज्ञान आदित्य भोजन। (4) मनुष्य भानति ज्ञानी दैविक ध्वजयामिनी। परम भोजन मनुष्य भोजन। (5) मनुष्य भानति ज्ञानी दैविक ध्वजयामिनी। परम भोजन मनुष्य भोजन। (6) मनुष्य भानति ज्ञानी दैविक ध्वजयामिनी। परम भोजन मनुष्य भोजन।

380 A similar story is recorded in Dasam Granth in Charitar No. 374 where Hingla talks about miracles
381 He is said to have showed 72 miracles to Emperor Aurangzeb.
from acquiring miracles by saying, “The aspirant for spiritual life is warned about the attraction of supernatural powers. They are spiritually meaningless and irrelevant”. (Bhagwad Gita page 58)

Extra sensorial perception is a gift of spiritualism but its use for self-aggrandizement or publicising personal occult powers is ego. Guru Nanak did show a miracle the like of which nobody had shown before. He used two levers to mystify the world. One was “Holy congregation” (ਸੰਸਾਦ) coming together of right thinking people and the second was ‘Word’ (ਸ਼ਬਦ) or right direction. Using these two levers of organisation and set philosophy he started the work which was later taken up by his followers and eventually culminated in the establishment of the Khalsa, the exploits of which are now known all over the world. It was a miracle, the like of which no religious leader has ever shown.

382 *ਪ੍ਰਤਿਵਾਦਨਾਂ* and *ਦਿਜਾਣਾ ਮੰਨਦਾਰੀ ਮੰਨਦਾਰੀ* have been the policy of the Sikh Gurus.

383 *ਸੰਸਦਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਾਮਿਕ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਾਮੀ ਮੱਣੀ ਜਿੱਤਿ ਹੋਇਂਦੀ ਹੀ ਸ਼ਾਕਾਹਾਰੀ ਹੋਇਂਦੀ ਹੀਂ* (ਰੂਪ ੯/੧੮-ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸੂਚਨਾ ਤੀ)
Chapter Thirteen
Worship

These days a number of Sikhs (Some of them overly baptised) have been seen worshipping goddesses. The film-makers appear to be consciously promoting the worship of statues and goddesses through the apparently baptised Sikh actors. As a result the Sikhs are adopting many of the erstwhile Hindu rituals, which were forbidden by the Sikh Gurus.

13.1 Gods and goddesses

Belief in numerous gods and goddesses is one of the cardinal principles of Hinduism. Since no one has ever seen or come across a god or goddess, it is not possible to describe them or to say whether they really exist and if so how many they are. Some put their number at 330,000,000. Some others put the number still higher. Air, fire, mountains, sun, trees, rivers (like Ganges), food, water, butter and salt etc are all gods. These gods and goddesses also have their offspring. For example Hanuman was born to Air, Parbati (Shiva’s wife) was the daughter of the Himalayas Mountain, Karan was the son of the sun God. In spite of this some scriptures testify that all gods were born to one mother called Aditi.

Hindu gods are also supposed to affect the human life and looks. For example to ask for ‘beauty’ the Hindus would worship Ashwani Kumar (son of a horse), for long life they worship Markanday, for learning music Saraswati is worshipped. For getting rid of disease and disadvantage the Hindus worship Shani god (the eighth and the youngest son of the Sun).

384 Even Brahmans and Emperors become gods. “सेतु दिनेन से भरत दे था, लेकिन भगवान से नहीं चाहा था || लेकिन देवों ने इस्मलिक, माति की भांति एक दिवस दिया || जाप जाप विवरक भगी
Like us human beings the gods are also fond of pets. For example Inder, the leader of the gods (Devtesh) has a bitch called Sarma. For riding, Brahma and his wife Saraswati\(^{385}\) use a Swan, Vishnu uses Garur (a bird), Shiv uses a bull, Ganesh uses a rat, Kam Devta (sex god) uses a parrot and the sun god travels in a chariot drawn by seven horses. Among the goddesses, Durga always uses a tiger to ride on, Bhairav uses a black dog, Sheetla uses a donkey, Mansa Devi uses a snake and Lakshami (Vishnu’s wife) uses a centipede. Shanishar uses a vulture as his aeroplane. Like their transport their favourite dishes are also different. For example Shanishar is pleased with oil, iron and lentils (हंग दी रूख). Some others are pleased with meat and intoxicating liquors.

Hindu gods are sometimes jealous of each other. They curse each other\(^{386}\) and even fight among themselves. Narda (born from Brahma’s forehead) and Indra have always been out to create misunderstandings and problems. Snitching and backbiting are permanently associated with these two gods. Indra, the leader of the gods, even raped Rishi (Sant) Gautama’s wife Ahalya.\(^{387}\) Brahma fell in love with Shiva’s wife Sati.\(^{388}\) Bhagwat Puran tells us that Brahma was a thief. He stole Krishna’s cows. All gods are fond of music and dance. Dev Dasis (young girls) dance to please the gods\(^{389}\) and the 6333 Gandharvas (and their wives Gandharvis) please the gods with music and songs. Gods also have servants. For example Lord Krishna’s servant was Gian who for some reason annoyed Lord Krishna. Krishna wanted to behead the servant but Gian ran away and took shelter with Arjun. Krishna had a fierce and gruesome fight with his own brother-in-law Arjun and only Brahma\(^{390}\) could stop them from fighting.

The gods are not very brave. Once they were tormented by the demons. Instead of facing the demons manly, they approached goddess Durga and beseeched her to save their lives.

\(^{385}\) Bengali Hindus believe that Vishnu had three wives. Sarasvati, Ganges and Lakhshmi. Once they had a bloody fight among themselves and therefore Vishnu gave Sarasvati to Brahma, Ganges to Shiva and kept Lakhshmi for himself.

\(^{386}\) Brahma cursed his son Narda to be always engaged in sex. Narda cursed his father by saying that the later will have sex with his own daughter.

\(^{387}\) The dirtiest pervert sex story about Shiva and Parbati is recorded in Kot Ruder Sanhita 4.12

\(^{388}\) This practice is still current in South India in spite of legal restrictions.

\(^{389}\) Brahma is called the Creator of the universe. Later he is said to have edited the four Vedas around 2500 BC. After 1728000 years of Satyug + 1296000 years of Treta + 864000 years of Daapar (Total 38,88,000 years) he was still alive. Was Brahma God or Krishna God? Are these Gods still alive?
The gods are also jealous of each other and are usually engaged in mutual recriminations and revenge. For example Vishnu turned himself into Narsingh and saved Prahlad from the atrocities of his father. This did not please Shiva because Prahlad’s father Hirnakashyap was Shiva’s follower. Shiva turned himself into a bird called ‘Sharabh’ and tore up Vishnu with his nails.

Sacrifices to propitiate the gods are considered pious acts and are known as Devkaram (Acts of piety). The most important six gods are jointly called Devshatak. They are Ganesh, Sun, Fire, Vishnu, Shiva, and Durga. Like us humans the gods and goddesses also revere a Guru. Their Guru is Barhispati (बर्हिस्पति). In Zind Avesta, the first religious book of the Parsi Aryans, the word Dev or Devta was used for असुर (devils) but later in the Hindu scripture it began to be used for angels (gods and goddesses).

13.2 Did the Sikh Gurus worship gods and goddesses?

The following arguments are usually advanced to prove that the Sikhs worship Hindu gods and goddesses.

1. Guru Gobind Singh worshipped Naina Devi goddess and obtained her blessings before instituting the Khalsa order. He composed Chandi Chariter in thankfulness to Chandi (Durga). He has clearly mentioned the name of the goddess in many couplets For example “भूलन भूलेंगी मिलेंगा वै OR तरह भे भाव उपर उचित सो कही, भगवान बलद आंतरी, भवना गाढ़ धर्मिन्द्रा में बहिरूकियों” (Dasam Granth) जीव मिलें भलीयी ज्ञान बंधें वी बंधें (Bhai Gurdas Second) etc.

391 Most of Shiva’s followers were cruel egoists and utterly merciless. Some of them are “Ravana”, “Vanasur” and “Hirnakashyap”.
392 In these sacrifices animals and humans were killed. Raja Sujag organised 1000 Rajsuya Yagyas on the banks of river Narbada in which 300,000 horses (Aspmedh Yagya) and 300,000 humans (Narmeh Yagya) were sacrificed. Later in another Yagya 400,000 cows (Gomedh Yagaya) were sacrificed to feed the Brahmins Guru Nanak writes, “इस धर्म जितने खरों" (pMnw 71), gYNfw mwir hom jg kIey dyviqAw kI bwxy (pMnw 1289)
393 Who was Naina Devi? King Daksh organised a ritual Hom but did not invite his daughter Sati. She felt insulted and jumped into the ritual fire. Lord Shiva lifted the corpse and roamed throughout the world. Sati’s eyes fell on this mountain and it came to be known as Naina Devi (Nain means eyes), Later where her tongue fell, it became Jawala Devi.
394 Sukha Singh (Gur Bilas), Santokh Singh (Gur Partap Suraj), Sumer Singh (Gur Bilas) and Giani Gian Singh (Panth Parkash) all wrote this story. They all appear to have copied it from Sarup Das Bhalla.
2. The Sikh Gurus visited Hindu religious places.

3. There are references to Hindu gods in the Sikh scripture.

In this connection the following facts should be noted before we take up this issue.

(a) Guru Granth Sahib is the only source of Sikhism authenticated by the Sikh Gurus. Any principle that violates the Gurbani contained in the Granth Sahib cannot be accepted as Sikhism

(b) Guru Gobind Singh could not be expected to violate the principles enunciated by the previous Gurus.

Let us now consider the story of guru Gobind Singh’s Devi worship.

1. First mention of this story is found in Mehna Parkash written by Sarup Das Bhalla in 1776 AD (See Sakhi No. 27 P.821 onwards). According to him the Hom ceremony (Sacrificial feast) took place on the top of Naina Devi hill. The goddess gave Guru Gobind Singh a Khanda. When the Amrit was ready Guru Gobind Singh himself was the first to drink it. The book was written 77 years after the supposed incident.

2. Ninety-nine years after Guru Gobind Singh the story appeared in Gur Bilas (Life of the 10th Guru written by Sukha Singh in 1798 AD) where a Pandit named Dutta Nand of Ujjian is said to have conducted a Hom ceremony. It was held on the banks of river Sutlej. It cost Rs 1,25,000 and lasted for four years.

3. 172 years after Guru Gobind Singh the story was reproduced in Panth Parkash (1880 AD) of Giani Gian Singh. Here the Hom is said have been performed by Pandit Kesho Datt of Benares on the hilltop of Naina Devi. It lasted for nine months. On the question of human sacrifice, the Guru suggested Kesho Datt himself to be sacrificed. Kesho Datt ran away in the night. (Macauliffe V.5

395 आगे अभी निसे के लिए लीत कही चाहने गरे नी निक से तन्य से तन्य निक से तन्य फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त फिक्त
p.65) and Malcolm (P.49-50) have reproduced the Panth Parkash version.

4. Later Swami Dya Nand made use of this fake story in his Satyarath Parkash to flail the Sikhs. He wrote, “ ……Among them was a brave man named Gobind Singh whose ancestors had been put to trouble by the Muslims. He wanted to take revenge but he had no wherewithal to do so. On the other hand the Muslim rule was on the ascendance. He had an event (Hom) organised and propagated that a goddess gave him a boon and a Khanda to fight the Muslims and that he had been assured victory… (Satyarth Parkash P. 379)

Taking advantage of these sources Pandit Sukhpal stated in the preface to his Urdu translation of Dasam Granth (1915 AD) that Guru Gobind Singh “…was a Hindu. To protect Gow Brahman was his Dharam. He used to worship Devis and Devtas like the ordinary Hindus. As a matter of fact his every action was on the same lines as the Hindus.”

All the above-mentioned source books suffer from numerous historical mistakes and contain a lot of self-contradictory matter, which does not agree with the line of thought in Guru Granth Sahib. Even the details of the stories are different in all the above sources. Some historians hazard a guess and say that the incident may have happened on Naina Devi hilltop in 1698 AD but no contemporary or semi-contemporary source confirms this. It sounds ridiculous that the goddess appeared at Naina Devi to bless the formation of the Khalsa but instead of instituting the Khalsa in her presence the Guru moved miles away to Anand Pur and waited for a year (April 1699 AD). It is also worth noting that Guru Gobind Singh had raised the sword and won a number of battles before 1698 AD and so had Guru Har Gobind before him without any help from a goddess. If they could be victorious without the aid of the goddess what was the need to placate the goddess?

396 Guru Gobind Singh had started martial training for his followers immediately after the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. On the Baiskhi day in 1679 AD a number of arms were offered to him by the Sangat of Kabul and Raja Rattan Rai. He started using the battle drum (बुंदल) and a pennant (खिताब) in 1682 AD, which were both forbidden by law. Fifty-two poets started warming the blood of the Sikhs through their ballads. Battle of Bhangani (15th April 1687), Battle of Nadaun (November 1688), Hussaini Battle (1695) etc had already been fought and won before the year 1698 AD when goddess is reported to have been worshipped by Guru Gobind Singh. It was before this event that he wrote letters (Hukam Namas) to his devoted followers to bring arms and enlist fighters. See his Hukam Name to Bhai Tiloka of 1694 AD and to Bhai Sukhia of the same
The incident is not even recorded in the supposed autobiography of Guru Gobind Singh contained in the Dasam Granth. (i) How could Guru Gobind Singh ignore such an important fact that was directly related to his alleged faith in a goddess? (ii) Again instead of praising the goddess, he writes, “My Guru is the One Lord, who was in the beginning and shall ever be” (iii) The Guru had 52 poets. None of them has written this story. If anything the Guru’s intimate childhood friend Bhai Prahld Singh contradicts the Devi-cult by dedicating the Khalsa to God when he writes, “हरिनाम बल्ली आल जी उड़ी ललितिवं धंधा” (iv) Gur Shobha written by one of Guru Gobind Singh’s court poets does not record this incident. (v) Abdulla Khan, the official reporter of Emperor Aurangzeb makes no mention of it.

“In his book “Guru Gobind Singh” Kartar Singh writes, “The alleged worship of Durga by the Guru, and all the stories based thereon, are mere fictions, inventions of the clever, yet unsikhlike people.” (Page102).

Indu Bhushan Bannerjee writes, “...It strikes us as extremely improbable that the Guru had gone through the severe expense and trouble that the ceremony entailed for a purpose that was wholly negative.” (Evolution of the Khalsa page 107)

13.3 Conclusion:

So far no one has been able to prove conclusively that the writings of Dasam Granth (which contains Chandi Chariter I and II and Chandi di var) have been really written by Guru Gobind Singh or that the Dasam Granth has not been corrupted.
There are at least four different versions of this Granth available all produced between 1738 AD and 1782 AD after the death of Guru Gobind Singh (1708 AD). The fact that the Dasam Granth was not published by Guru Gobind Singh in his lifetime, is itself a proof that Guru Gobind Singh had no control over its contents. Again the four versions disagree a lot on their contents.

If the Guru had worshipped a goddess, he would have left clear instructions for his followers or entered hymns in honour of the goddess in Guru Granth Sahib. As it is, he has nowhere even thanked the Brahman who was allegedly instrumental in making the goddess appear. Such a gigantic and meritorious task was done through Vedic hymns but the Guru nowhere mentions any such hymn for his descendants to use in times of need. The lines about Kalka and Bhagauti quoted above cannot in any way be connected with Guru Gobind Singh. Connecting a goddess with Guru Gobind Singh is atrocious because it negates all that the forerunner Gurus had done.

Again it should be noted that in the same Dasam Granth Guru Gobind Singh himself forbids worshipping the creation in preference to the worship of the Creator. Macauliffe writes, “Durga could never be an object of worship to the Guru, for he reiterated again and again, that it was the Creator alone who should be worshipped and Durga had been created by the creator for the destruction of the demons (p.82). How could the same Guru worship Durga (in Chandi Chariter) or Kalka, who was a creature created by God. Would the Guru violate his own principles?

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401 1. Bhai Mani Singh version 2. Baba Deep Singh version 3. Bhai Sukha Singh version and 4. Bhai Charhat Singh version. In order not to offend any Sikh and cause further fissiparous tendencies among the Sikhs, I have made use of quotations from Dasam Granth throughout this book. My own belief is that only a few portions of the Dasam Granth can be safely accepted as the Guru’s writings. However I have no qualms in quoting it where it agrees with the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib. Similarly I have used quotes from various other non-Sikh sources, which support the line of thought in Gurbani.

402 Jehangir killed Guru Gobind Singh’s great grandfather Guru Arjan Dev but this Granth praises Jehangir as a very just king. “समथे लोकोंती भानु अंग्रेज समझे तो नहीं होते (रंग ५५७).”

403 1 कुरान मे इस्लामी हमले तो जिम्मों हो २. जहां मे तैब तभी हो कहा स्वतंत्र तभी हो हों तो साध जाने दे करों त अद्वैत स्वतंत्र तभी हो (५३)

404 Guru Gobind Singh himself writes that Bhagauti sits as a slave at the feet of God. भगवान के पास जीता ब्रह्मान । and Gurbani says, जहाँ हों इसी जीता हों वहाँ वही अद्वैत हो (रंग २५५). How could Guru Gobind Singh be Manmukh! देवीन्द्र नामी जीता वही हो । मंद सुधार जीता पंथकुमार (रंग २५५)
Some historians write that the drama was played by the Guru to prove the ineffectiveness of the goddess in helping the nation. But the Guru himself condemns this sort of dramas in the so-called Dasam Granth, which is quoted to prove him a worshipper of the Goddess. Another fact worth remembering is that according to Sumer Singh the Shudras were not allowed to go near the Havan of the goddess. This clearly contradicts the Guru’s gift of Amrit to the Shudras on equal footing with others. How could the Guru offer Amrit to the Shudras hated by the Goddess and the Brahman?

If for the sake of argument it is accepted that Guru Gobind Singh worshipped Durga or Kalka, then he should not be expected to worship anything else but we find that the same Dasam Granth also proves that he worshiped sword (भवल) when he wrote: “नमस्कृत ही भवल बहुधू खोड़े वे हिंदू फिहु रुखते” Not only the sword he even worshipped the guns and canons “माने ढील ढांग सिरह मदु पोड़े” It should also be kept in mind that a goddess is worshipped through a stone statue but Dasam Granth itself condemns worship of a statue by saying “पार्श्व भवल वे नदु धन तेज में भवलमार रहती” (406) and defines Parmesar (परमेशर) as निरंबोध निर्परिवृत्त निरपेक्ष (without physical shape, always present, without contours).

The conclusion derived from the use of words like Durga or Kalka etc cannot therefore be accepted as a conclusive proof that the Guru worshipped the goddess.

Again the goddess herself is stated to have no power. God is the source of all power. The others simply beg him for it. Why would Guru Gobind Singh beg from a beggar?

405: कृपया ध्यान दें, यह किसी नहीं है कि दुर्गा या कल्का।
406: क्रिया कवि ने कहा कि हिंदू ने भवल का देवी का माफ किया।
407: अगर दुर्गा या कल्का का देवी का नाम है तो वहीं दुर्गा की सर्वश्रेष्ठता है।
408: यह यह मत करना चाहिए कि गुरु गोबिंद सिंह दुर्गा का माफ किया।
The word कव्लस्ता has been used by Bhai Gurdas (second) in his var about the Khalsa. Whether such a person really existed and wrote the var is uncertain. Who added this var to those written by his predecessor Bhai Gurdas (first) is not known. The very fact that it was interpolated into another author’s work makes the writer’s intention doubtful.

Concerning the use of the word बगौत, it needs to be noted that this word does not always mean “Bhagwati Devi” (wife of Shiva). The word Bhagauti has been extensively used in Gurbani for God and God’s devotees. The Guru could not (if he used it) have used it for goddess Bhawani because the goddess is condemned in the Granth Sahib as useless for humanity. “The angelic beings, goddesses and gods are deluded by doubt. The Siddhas and seekers, and even Brahma are deluded by doubt. Wandering around, deluded by doubt, people are ruined.”

The most prominent Sikh Bhai Mani Singh writes, “Naam is the God of gods. Some worship goddesses, some worship Shiva; some others bow to Ganesh or other gods. The Sikhs of the Guru only worship Satnam, which clears all impediments. This is why the dedication is offered through Satnam.” (Gian Ratnawali)
It is clearly stated in the Dasam Granth that Chandi Di War is a translation of Durga Saptashti, a part of Markanday Puran. Ideas expressed by the original writer of the Saptashti (700 Shalokas) cannot be foisted upon the translator. If a Hindu translates the Quran, he will not become a Muslim. Even in Chandi Di war the word Bhagauti is not always used for the goddess. For example in the following lines it is used for the sword, “

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In his book Dabistan-e-Mazahib (see Taleem 2 Nazar12), the Muslim writer Mohsin Fani has recorded a story. A Sikh of Guru Hargobind, named Bhairo entered a temple and smashed the nose of the statue of goddess. He was arrested and brought before Raja Tara Chand of Kirat Pur and asked to explain why he did the sacrilege. The Sikh said, “Ask the Devi “who did it?” and why did she feel helpless to call for assistance? If she cannot protect herself or call for help how can she protect other people?” The Guru did not approve the act and admonished his Sikh for injuring people’s religious susceptibilities. However the Sikh had proved his point. To say that Guru Gobind Singh worshipped the same goddess for protection is ridiculous.

In passing it should also be noted that Chandi helped Inder. Inder is a known voluptuary interested only in dances of the Apasras (beautiful damsels). He sent women of bad character to the Rishis (Sants) to prevent them from praying to God. He himself raped Rishi Gautam’s wife Ahalya and suffered severe punishment for this transgression. In Chandi Di war the goddess Chandi fought in favour of Inder to help him regain his throne. She is eulogised by saying, “You committed a great act by killing the demons and securing kingdom for Indra, on this account your reputation has enhanced in the whole world.”

Would Guru Gobind Singh worship such a goddess who promoted prudery, prurience and lasciviousness by helping Indra?

Some people interpret Chandi as “God’s power” little realising that God’s power cannot be isolated from God. Anybody worshipping God automatically worships him in entirety (power, grace, compassion etc.)

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413 sqseI kI kQw Xih pUrI BeI hY (See Durga Saptashti Chapter 12)

414 dYqn ko mwr rwj dInoN qY suryS hUM ko, bfo js lIno jg qyro eI pRqwp hY (cMfI cirqR aukq:iblws:AMk 227)
Concerning the Gurus’ visit to the Hindu temples there is no doubt that Bhai Lehma Ji and Baba Amar Das visited Hindu places of religion and performed Hindu rituals for years but once they accepted Sikhism, they did not perform any Hindu ritual. Their visits to Hindu temples afterwards were planned to condemn Hindu practices and to preach Sikhism.\footnote{Concerning the Gurus’ visit to the Hindu temples there is no doubt that Bhai Lehma Ji and Baba Amar Das visited Hindu places of religion and performed Hindu rituals for years but once they accepted Sikhism, they did not perform any Hindu ritual. Their visits to Hindu temples afterwards were planned to condemn Hindu practices and to preach Sikhism.}

In Sikhism the word Devta (god or angel) is used for pious person and the word Devi is used to denote a pious and faithful female.\footnote{In Sikhism the word Devta (god or angel) is used for pious person and the word Devi is used to denote a pious and faithful female.} Worship of gods and goddesses is forbidden and they are described as beings of no consequence and even their existence is denied.\footnote{Worship of gods and goddesses is forbidden and they are described as beings of no consequence and even their existence is denied.} The Sikhs are instructed to accept no gods or goddesses but only to direct their prayers to God.\footnote{The Sikhs are instructed to accept no gods or goddesses but only to direct their prayers to God.}

Guru Gobind Singh believed in God and God alone and worshipped no other gods.\footnote{Guru Gobind Singh believed in God and God alone and worshipped no other gods.} This was in line with the teachings of the previous Gurus and he could not have gone against the philosophy preached by his father and his grandfather in the house of Guru Nanak.\footnote{This was in line with the teachings of the previous Gurus and he could not have gone against the philosophy preached by his father and his grandfather in the house of Guru Nanak.}
Chapter Fourteen

Sant

The word Sant⁴²¹ is quite old and has been used in the Hindu religious books since times immemorial. It is defined as “Spiritually elevated person who has realised God and is at peace with his mind.”⁴²² What is conspicuously missing in the old Hindu books is the name of any person known as “Sant”. There are Rishis, Brahmcharis and Bhagats but not a single “Sant”.

The renowned Sikh scholar Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha defines this word as तिलक्कार (Knowledgeable person), गौरव (Intellectual), उच्च (Highest), समस्त (Highly Respectable). ⁴²³ A Sikh Sant is therefore a highly intellectual morally perfect person who follows a set of principles and stands for the whole of humanity. He does not compromise his principles even in times of extreme danger. In the Guru Granth Sahib the words मन, मुक्ति, देवता, संन्यास, महात्मा, मेहरा नत, मद्य विद्वान वा बुद्धिमान वा etc have been used interchangeably and are most often used in plural form indicating that they stand for pious people of all denominations. The simplest definition of a Sant as given by the Sikh Gurus is, “Only He is the Sant who is blessed by God. All his deeds coincide with those of God’s.”⁴²⁴

⁴²¹ The word ‘Sant’ should not be confused with Christian (or English word) Saint. A Saint is declared as such after the death of the person on the basis of three miracles occurring due to him/her. The Sikh Sant is a living, spiritually enlightened Gurmukh who lives according to the principles enunciated in the Holy Granth. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha writes, “मन दिव्यमल । नमस्ते सत्तवा सत्तवा नमस्ते। (bKv. 184) See definition of Sant, “अतर भलू तिलकट वैविद्य तरे, सुमार्गायते।” (bKv. 867)

⁴²² भूत युद्ध विद्वान संन्यास (कुम्भ तु माता एक संन्यास मुक्त अंतर मंड दे )

⁴²³ The Quran defines a saint as follows, “He who was dead and whom we have brought to life making for him a light whereby he walketh among men.” (Quran VI)

⁴²⁴ One unique
Elsewhere Guru Arjan Dev gives another full definition of the *Sants* confirming the same concept as follows:

“At all times they keep the Lord in mind and surrender to His Will. They are humble and consider only God as their support. Dear brother listen, their qualities cannot be described. They remain busy in remembering the Lord and even their rest is spent in singing His praises. They make no difference between friends and foes and see God in both. They erase millions upon millions of sins. They dispel suffering; they are givers of the life of the soul. They are steadfast, men of word and shun wealth and reputation. Even the gods and the angels cherish their company. Blessed is a meeting with them, and fruitful is their service. With his palms pressed together, Nanak offers his prayer: O Lord, Treasure of Excellence, please bless me with the service of such Sants.”

*Haumain* (Self-centred concern) is a part of human beings. It is only through this trait that humans are able to live and make worldly progress. However problems arise when too much attention to it brings the man down to the level of animals. In his daily life an ordinary man is usually dominated by self-will and his activities are dictated by ego (*Haumain*), which is a limitation to his spiritual progress. *Haumain* is opposed to *Naam*. The *Sants* instruct humans to rise above self-will and substitute *Haumain* with God-centeredness by remerging with God and living a virtuous life.
Guru Nanak preached that the way to God lies through living a meaningful and pious life and that the higher spiritual status is attained only through altruistic and moral living. Living a truthful ideal life man learns to carry out God’s will through his creative activities in the society. His spiritual life and moral life become synonymous. The selflessness thus garnered brings merit to the soul and helps the devotee get attuned to the all-soul. At this stage whatever good the man does, is claimed by him as the work of God. All trials and tribulations that befall are borne with equanimity accepting them as God’s dispensation.

Hindu sants usually believed in leaving the world altogether and practising detachment. The Hindu way of abandoning the world or involvement in penance and mortification of the body is contrary to the Guru’s way. According to Sikhism, God dwells within us, and that is where man must find Him through self-consciousness and self-less activity. For an individual self-centered man (Manmukh) the way to religion is to try to turn himself into God-centred person (Gurmukh). Those who tread this path under the perfect guidance of a Guru eventually become as spiritually enlightened as the Guru (This happened with Angad who from being an ordinary Sikh became the second Guru of the Sikhs). Those who have not reached the summit, and are never the less far advanced in spirituality, are called Sants, Sadh or Gurmukh. Their company ennobles a person.

14.1 Modern day Sants

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427 schu ErY sBu ko aupir scu Awcwru  (pMnw 62)
428 "jy vf Bwg hovih muiK msqik hir rwm jnw Bytwie, drsn u sMq dyhu kir ikrpw sBu dwld duKu lih jwie (m:4 pMnw 881) swhU d`snmirXwn s` invwso sdw suKo ( DMmpd Xv.206) (swD UAw dw sMg SuB qy suKdweI huMdw hY")

During the time of the Sikh Gurus the word “Sant” existed only in the mystical realm and no one claimed physically to be known as a Sant. The status of a Sant was difficult to obtain and one was supposed to go through a long process of self-reformation and introspection. Now that worldliness has begun to spread its wings, the worldly Sants have started appearing like mushrooms. These self-made Sants make too much noise but within them is a great void. Therefore today the word Sant has been devalued like a base coin. Once it was a reality and the Sants were rare but now is the age of skulduggery and Sants are aplenty. There are hundreds of impostors and cheats full of Haumain. They come nowhere near the ideal set by the Sikh Gurus. There is a dichotomy between what they preach and what they themselves live by. The Sikh Gurus did not name any Sants during their time for 239 years. Although there were numerous Sikhs who had attained very high spiritual positions they were all called Bhai (Brother).

Baba Buddha, Bhai Mardana, and Bhai Mansukh (who went to Ceylon and converted Raja Shibnabh to Sikhism) were very prominent Sikhs of Guru Nanak.

At the time of Guru Amar Das there were 22 Gursikhs of high character who preached Sikhism and occupied posts of masands (preachers). Bhai Gurdas preached Sikhism at Agra and Benares, Bhai Kattu and Bhai Garhia (Sikhs of 6th Guru) preached in Kashmir. Bhai Tirloka, Bhai Diaia and Bhai Kataru (Sikhs of Guru Har Rai) preached in Kabul. Bhai Mati Das and Bhai Sati Das accepted a torturous death in front of Guru Tegh Bahadur and yet none of them was called a “Sant”. The five Pyaras of Guru Gobind Singh were not called Sants but only Bhai. Later Baba Deep Singh, Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Subeg Singh, Bhai Shahbaz Singh, Baba Banda Singh Bahadur all laid down their lives for the Sikh cause but were not named Sants. The Bhattas were spiritually so advanced that the Guru included their writings in the Guru Granth Sahib. Yet they were not called Sants. In the modern times Bhai Kahan Singh, Professor Sahib Singh, Bhai Gurumukh Singh, Giani Dit Singh and many others were great scholars of Gurbani and yet they were called...
neither Braham Giani nor *Sants*. Compared with them our so-called *Sants* call themselves 10008 Sant Braham Giani Maharaj etc and live in luxury. More befitting numeral honorific for most of them would be 420(cheats).

The Guru was desperate in finding a *Sant* and was prepared to sacrifice himself at the feet of the *Sant*. He also mentions that a “*Sant*” is rare and is one among millions. Outlining the duties of the *Sants* Bhai Gurdas says that a “*Sant*” is like a fence for the crop.

Our Gurus called themselves lowly (Neech), “Slave”, Servant, or even “Dog” but our modern-day Sikh *Sants* call themselves *Braham Giani* (knower of God). Like the devil quoting scriptures they even quote hymns from Gurbani out of context to prove their *Santhood*.

They cannot be imagined to have attained the spiritual glory attained by those who remained in the Guru’s presence all their lives and even sacrificed themselves. In fact *Bhagat* Bhikha writes that he searched for *Sants* and found none. “I have been searching for the *Sants*; I have seen so many holy and spiritual people. The hermits, Sanyasis, ascetics, penitents, fanatics and Pandits all speak sweetly. I wandered around lost for a year, but no one touched my soul. I listened to preachers and teachers, but I could not be happy with their lifestyles. (P.1395)

Wherever the word ‘*Sant*’ occurs in Gurbani it is figuratively and reverently used for the Gurus or for those who had started on the path of spirituality and not for any ochre coloured-overall wearer, half-clad, ash-smeared impostors who go about spreading fear of their occult powers among people or arrogantly claim rapport with God. For example when Guru Arjan Dev writes” *By good fortune, I have met the Sant Guru*, he is referring to Guru Ram Das. Here and there the word *Sant* has also been used for groups of pious people (or Sikhs).
Most of the modern day Sikh Sants are bereft of spiritual qualities and are not conversant with Gurbani. They behave like a wolf in a sheep’s clothing and many of them have fallen from grace. They have been imprisoned for sexual offenses. They sell drugs (like opium, Hashish, LSD etc) and extort money from gullible Sikhs specially women. They are also introducing Hindu rituals (like Kumbh, coconut, red cloth, jote, Arti, blowing conch shell, showering flowers, Sampat Paaths and mute Akhand Paaths). Some of them even pretend to live without eating but enjoy good nutrition behind the scenes. They treat Guru Granth Sahib as an idol. The Gurus did not intend to make the Granth into an object of worship like the Hindu statues. Right from the time of Guru Nanak the Guru of the Sikhs has been the Shabad (Word) or the message conveyed to the world through the ‘Word’. Gurbani says, “I am a sacrifice to the Guru who has directed me to God. By putting the collyrium (of knowledge through the ‘Word’) in my eyes he has enabled me to understand God’s law.” Some self-opinionated Sants have even gone a step further and virtually declared themselves as Gurus. They are introducing forbidden rituals (picture worship, worshipping graves, fasts, penances and issuing amulets etc) and propagating myths, which go against the grain of the Sikh philosophy. They call their rituals Sewa little realising that Sewa of the Guru has been defined by the Guru himself as “comprehension of the Guru’s word and the obliteration of Haumain”. It was Sants like these whom Kabir equated with Cheats.

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440 ByK krY bhuqu icqu folY AMqir kwmu kroDu AhMkwru (pMnw 1132) bwhir ByK bhuqu cqurweI mnUAw dh idis DwvY
441 The Sants have invented so many types of Paaths. For example Sadharan Paath, Sadharan learning Paath, Akhand Paath, Sampat Paath, Akhand Sampat Paath, Sadharan Sampat Paath, Saptahak, Katha Parman, Paath Dasam Granth, Akhand Paath Dasam Granth, Sampat Paath Dasam Granth etc (See Rehat Maryada published by Damdami Taksal page 247 for details). The Sants do not accept the Rehat Maryada published by the SGPC. Every San publishes his own Rehat Maryada. They have turned reading of the Granth into a ritual and a Paath can even be purchased.
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443 The Sants have invented so many types of Paaths. For example Sadharan Paath, Sadharan happy Occasion Paath, Sadharan learning Paath, Akhand Paath, Sampat Paath, Akhand Sampat Paath, Sadharan Sampat Paath, Saptahak, Katha Parman, Paath Dasam Granth, Akhand Paath Dasam Granth, Sampat Paath Dasam Granth etc (See Rehat Maryada published by Damdami Taksal page 247 for details). The Sants do not accept the Rehat Maryada published by the SGPC. Every San publishes his own Rehat Maryada. They have turned reading of the Granth into a ritual and a Paath can even be purchased.
For the Sikhs their Guru’s instruction is like the company of a pious Sant.\(^{447}\) In the final analysis the Guru attaches more importance to deed than to creed and our modern day sants care little for deeds. Many modern day Sants are dominated by political ambition to the detriment of their spiritual devotion, which according to Sikhism must take precedence.

It was about such self-styled self-righteous false Sants that the Gurus said, “If the saint is himself spiritually destitute, how can the follower be satiated?”\(^{448}\) It cannot be imagined that the Guru pleaded before God to make him the dust of the feet of such Sants when he wrote, “Thy slave Nanak seeks thy blessing. Make me the dust of the feet of the Sants.”\(^{449}\) Bhai Gurdas warns the Sikhs to be on guard against impostors and not to fall a prey to such thug Sants when he writes:

> “बुझ ते आसन विकसन शरण सदिये॥ अब संत धरती बंधन न अर्पे बाजू देंगे शरण सब संत ने रति निर्जन अर्पे॥
> दहल न भूतिय वीरियाँ झिंज डूं छिपाये॥
> पहुँचे दिनिय दया पूजा मुखु वृद्ध राम अर्पे॥ निःश्रुत रघु भाष्य भद्रीविन वृद्धिवर सुवर्णे”
> (B.Gurdas.War 37 Pauri VI. 17)

### 14.2 Sants or swindlers?

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\(^{447}\) अन्मल अन्मल ते सुझूँ सकी ते है अन्मल अन्मल पुरे (एंग 360)

\(^{448}\) बुझ तें सत्स नाम चिन्नु चर्चित्ते सब अर्पे भान घड़ूँ (एंग 329) रिहा अनुभव करे है भतो ज्ञान अभिय अनुभव गवर (एंग 329).This body is for action.Gurmukhs churn Gurbani to understand the essence.

\(^{449}\) सालों निकाल सांभारी हैं तान रिहा । उपर वार से संत न अन्नदेव कल्याण से दात (एंग 376) Tulsi Das wrote, “Io संतों वारियाँ बलराम बन्दर बल भक्त हाँ बांग वारिया देश संत संत से।” रिहा है भवन विश्वास संत भगवान करे है। रिहा है सब उपर बलराम बन्दर जी आयें चंडी हूँ दिखाया है। (हिंदी रस) For authentic information about some modern so-called Sants read “संतें ते वेदंग” ठेक वृद्धिवर सिंह संत कर। For qualities of real Sants read Guru Granth Sahib page 1357 भुज दें तरं हर गूढ भक्त हुक कुँ लुक लुक….

\(^{447}\) बुझ बुझ जग्न नाम ते भज्ज जित्तार निरिन्द नाम चिन्तू। (एंग 3272) नूक धीरोंस कंगाल अन्नदेव संत ने रिहा है प्रभे है (एंग 3272)

\(^{448}\) सालों निम है संत जू बुझ वे निम के झुक ते वृद्ध मुखु निरिन्द निरिन्द बुझे (एंग 306) “सिश्वानि धिनि मट ने नूं नूंक संत वारिया है धिनि हैं।जग्न लूटे में अजित है उन बुझ वृद्धिवर देश है।” नाम है नूं के किस नूंक के झुक ते वृद्ध है जू बुझ है।

\(^{449}\) नूक अनुभव सूक्त अभि में बुझ जित्तार ली मूल (एंग 204)

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No human being can grant another human being a child. Yet some modern day Saints claim to have this power. Our Gurus never granted any child to anyone but only prayed to God for everything. Since the Gurus were spiritually extremely high in the order of merit, their prayers may have been very effective.

The true Gurus and Bhagats do not ordinarily pray for worldly things to show their spiritual might or greatness. If this were so, Guru Nanak would have compelled God to grant a child to Bibi Nanaki who remained childless all through her life.

Some people even visit the graves of dead Muslim Saints asking for the fulfilment of their desires. This is simply ridiculous. If God listened to those Saints and favoured their word He would not have caused their death.

Stories of religious people granting children are recorded in hagiographical literature, which abounds in myths and miracles not approved by Gurbani. The chants, amulets, incantations etc are nothing but tricks to hoodwink the gullible people. Saints cannot subvert the laws of nature.
Chapter Fifteen
Revelation

Since their birth on this planet human beings have been struggling with nature. Over the centuries, thinkers have studied nature and have carefully examined air, water, fire, insects, animals, vegetation, and humans and have concluded that there must be some power, which controls all this. Such speculation proceeding from the known (nature) to the unknown (God) produced a belief, which can be called natural religion. One of the originators of such beliefs was the Greek philosopher Anaxagoras who was captivated by the order, purpose and design in the universe and imagined a universal intelligence behind it. Other Greek thinkers like Aristotle (384-322 BC), Plato (427-348 BC) and Socrates (470-401 BC) supported this view. Later many others like Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677 AD) and Descartes (1596-1650 AD) joined the bandwagon.

“In the Rig Veda we have the impassioned utterances of primitive but poetic souls which seek some refuge from the obstinate questings of sense and outward things. The hymns are philosophical to the extent that they attempt to explain the mysteries of the world not by means of any superhuman insight or extraordinary revelation but by the light of unaided reason.”(Dr. Radhakrishnan – Indian Philosophy Vol 1 p.71).

This brings us to the second type of religion that of superhuman insight as mentioned above by Dr. Radhakrishnan. The urge for starting this type of religion originates from God, who reveals his secrets to his closest followers with instruction to make His Will (Hukam) current in the world. Such followers are known as Peers, Prophets, or Gurus. The attributes of God and His Will are ontological (abstract) and cannot be understood or explained in simple terminology. Revelation of these attributes is a subjective mental phenomenon known only to the Gurus or peers themselves, who explain it as best they can. We either accept their imaginative spiritual experiences or reject them but we cannot question
their validity or disprove them.
There are many types of Gurus and peers but four of them are common.

(1) A human being appears on earth and claims that he is God or God’s son. Hindu God Krishna and Christ fall in this category.

(2) A human being claims that God called him into His presence and entrusted a message. He then instructed him to preach that message to the world. We can place Jewish Prophet Moses in this category. He claimed that he was called to a burning bush where God spoke to him and handed over the proverbial Ten Commandments.

(3) There are other prophets whom God contacted through a messenger, entrusted them his message and asked them to spread it. Prophet Muhammad is said to have regularly received messages for 22 years between 610-632 AD in this fashion from angel Gabriel. In this case Prophet Muhammad is considered only a conduit through which the message is spread.

(4) In the fourth type a Godman appears, claims direct spiritual enlightenment, attributes everything to God, lives and works according to God’s Hukam and preaches his ideas in God’s name. He remains spiritually attuned with God and claims to translate God’s Hukam in his own words to make it intelligible to ordinary human beings. He declines to change his utterances, which he claims are inspired by God. Guru Nanak’s religion is a revealed religion and the Guru claims direct rapport with God. “The propitious word of the Lord dawned on me. My ego disappeared and I began to see the Lord all around” (AGGS P.628).

All four types have one thing in common. They all believe in the existence

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453 Xdw Xdw ih DrmsX iglwinr BvqI Bw rqI, ABuiQAwnm qwdAwqmwnm srjwmhm

454 sMqn kI suix swcI swKI ] so bolih jo pyiKih AwKI (pMnw 894)

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of God and uphold morality in their own way. Whereas natural religion is impermanent and is always in a flux, the revealed religion is unchangeable.

Some western scholars of Sikhism attach their deep-felt prejudices to the study of Sikhism and put it in the category of natural religions. Some others consider Sikhism as a tradition and not a new religion. They call it a rehash of effete Hindu creed in which Nanak grew up from birth. Yet others like Dr. Trumpp say that Guru Nanak picked up pieces of information from the Hindu and Islamic scriptures and created a syncretism called Sikhism. They are attempting to prove that Guru Nanak was not a Godman or a Guru. Mr. Macaulliffe has, however, stated emphatically that Sikhism is a true religion in its own right, has exclusive ideology, and is perfect.

Westerners apply their own notions of Christianity and pre-conditioned minds to irresistibly foist their own prejudices on Sikhism. Their study of Sikhism is anything but satisfactory. Some of them apply scientific and inappropriate methodology to unravel the mysteries of religion. Logic and empirical proofs cannot fathom the notions of Truth, beauty, peace and compassion etc. Visionary experiences defy empirical verification, quantification or dissection for scientific studies. Since the existence of God cannot be proved, scientific analysis of revelation will simply turn a person atheist.

Another mistake the western writers deliberately appear to be making is that they mix hagiology with religion little realising that hagiology can at best be classified a part of history written by devotees from a pre-conceived view of life. The writers of the Guru period were not scientifically trained to comprehend and explain religion and neither did they receive education on scientific lines. Their writings cannot be passed as authentic exposition of religion or a part of it. Since hagiology is a part of the Bible, the western scholars while studying Sikhism sub-consciously mix it with Janam Sakhis and other hagiographic literature produced by various Sikh and non-Sikh writers in the post Guru period. The ideology of Janam Sakhis does not agree with the authentic scripture, which in the case of the Sikhs is Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Granth Sahib does not contain mythical stories and unbelievable parables like the Bible so the

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455 "Mere metaphysical notions founded on the abstractions of Suficism (Sufism?) and the Vedant philosophy” (Mills History of India vii,102). The Granth is “A compound of mystical absurdities” Baron Hugel Travels p.283.
western writers import such matter from the *Janam Sakhi* literature and pass it on as Sikhism.

It is beyond the purview of this book to discuss this point in any greater detail. The reader is advised to study the sacred *Guru Granth Sahib* and satisfy his curiosity on the issue. It is however, worth noting that whereas the other prophets claimed rapport with God only when they had attained adulthood, Guru Nanak claimed it at the very young age of six when he went to school and composed his first hymn (Patti Likhi). No other Prophet in the world has claimed communication with God in his childhood or started demonstrating his concern for humanity at such a tender age. Again no other prophet challenged the established religious practices as Guru Nanak did by declining to accept *janeu* (Hindu religious thread) at an early age. Not a single religious leader ventured outside his own country to preach his religion as did Guru Nanak.

A revelation is consubstantial (of one and the same substance) with divinity. It is a projection or eternalisation of the Divine. Only a person fully attuned with God’s revelation under the influence of His Divine Spirit can compose an inspired text like Guru Granth Sahib. Such ‘Word’ therefore transcends its human and terrestrial limitations and is the direct and tested path to God.

Every word of the sacred *Guru Granth Sahib* proclaims mystical spirituality and wisdom, which cannot but be Godly and revealed.
Chapter Sixteen
Originality of Sikhism

During the nineteenth century the colonial officials and Christian Missionaries, whose intention was to discredit Sikhism and transplant it with Christianity, deliberately floated the idea that Sikhism is a copy of Hinduism. They strained every nerve to contrast the imagined pacifism of Guru Nanak with the supposed militancy of Guru Har Gobind and Guru Gobind Singh. They weaved criticism and unsubstantiated remarks around their assumed stand. Some unscrupulous people were on the look out for such an opportunity and started justifying these conclusions on the following lines.

1. The Sikhs came out of the Hindus. All Gurus were Khatri Hindus.

“Surrounded during his childhood by Hindu influences, Gobind Rai succeeded to his office under every temptation to remain within the pale of orthodox Hinduism” (Rose Vol.1 p.694)

2. The Gurus have used Hindu vocabulary and concepts.

3. Gurbani is a summary of the Vedas.

4. Hindu gods such as Ram, Hari and Krishna are mentioned in the Granth.

5. Sikhism is a continuation of Sant (Bhagti) movement

In 1897 Lala Thakur Das and Bawa Narain Singh wrote a book titled “Sikh Hindu Hain.” This book created a lot of controversy.
We will discuss this issue here briefly but before we do so, we should be clear what Hindu stands for and what is Hinduism.

**16.1 Origin of the word Hindu?**

The word “Hindu” is not found in the Vedas or any other Hindu religious book and neither is it Aryan by descent. Muslim invaders used this word contemptuously and disdainfully for the Indian people. Its origin has been traced back to Persian roots.

For our purpose we would define Hindu as somebody who believes in Vedas, Puranas and Simirities. The four Vedas are considered the source of Hinduism. In course of time six different interpretations of the Vedas gave rise to six different religious groups. They were (1) Vedant (2) Vaishnav (3) Shiv (4) Sakat (5) Brahman and (6) Adwait. Most often they contradicted each other. For example Vaishnavas are vegetarians but some other Hindu sects are meat-eaters and have been so for centuries. Some worship fire others worship statues (of Ram Chandra and Krishna etc). There are myriads of sects worshiping snakes, rats, phallus, fire, air, cows, and trees etc as gods.

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459 The word ‘Hindu’ was not in use in India before Muhammad Bin Qasim’s attack on India in the 8th century. The question about its meaning was first raised in 1920 when 45 learned Brahmans of Benares had concluded that the word “Hindu” is a Muslim word therefore it is not proper to be called a “Hindu” Hindu leader Swami Dyanand did not like this word and suggested that the word ‘Arya’ should be used instead of ‘Hindu’.

460 In Persian/Arabic it means a thief, a dishonest person or a cheat. Professor Sher Singh was taken to High court at Chandi Garh on 27 January 1984 (F.I.R No. 40) for interpreting “Hindu” like this. “Universal Religion” (1952) by R.N.Suraya Narain, "Arya Awami" by Lala Lajpat Rai, "Amniliation of Castes" by Dr. Ambedkar and many other sources were quoted in the court. The Judge also consulted Persian Dictionary ‘Lughat-e-Kishwari’ Lucknow page 615 which confirmed the meanings of ‘Hindu’. The case against professor Sher Singh was dismissed.

461 This definition was given by Swami Vivekanand when he visited Chicago in 1893AD. He disliked calling the religion ‘Hindu’ and suggested that it should be called Vedic religion.

462 Strangely most Hindus consider Ram Chandra as a foremost Hindu prophet (originator or founder) but his name does not appear in any of the four Vedas.
16.2 Definition of Hinduism?

Hinduism is a great religion and majority of Indians are Hindus. Unfortunately every effort to define Hinduism has failed. According to Mr. W.Crooke, “No problem is more difficult than that of framing a definition of Hinduism.” In the same strain Mr. Macnicol writes, “The question, what is Hinduism, is one to which no one is likely ever to be able to give a simple or quite intelligible answer. It has no creed summing up authoritatively its tenets. It has no historical personality at its centre whose life dates its beginning that can be discerned. ......... It is an amalgam of often contradictory beliefs and practices, held together in one by certain powerful ideas and by a system of social regulations.”

According to Sir Alfred Lyall Hinduism “is a troubled sea without shore or visible horizon, driven to and fro by the winds of boundless credulity and grotesque invention.”

It is not only the non-Hindus who find it difficult to define Hinduism. Trying to define it, the Hindu Philosopher Dr. S. Radha Krishnan (ex President of India) is equally confused. He writes: “To many it seems to be a name without any content. Is it a museum of beliefs, a medley of rites, or a mere map, a geographical expression? Its content, if it has any, has altered from age to age; from community to community. It meant one thing in the Vedic period, another in the Brahmanical and a third in the Buddhist. It seems one thing to the Saivite, another to the vaishnavite, a third to the saka.” (The Hindu view of life P.12)

All we can safely conclude from this discussion is that Hinduism is a heterogeneous intermixture of disjointed and sometimes contradictory ideas. In the strictest sense of the word it is not a religion but a set of diverse polytheistic beliefs and practices.

16.3 Is Sikhism a copy of Hinduism?

Any reader who has studied Sikhism would know that the above remarks by various people do not apply to Sikhism, which started with a historical personality and has a definite set of principles unchanged since the time of its preceptor. In spite of this Mahatma Gandhi wrote, “My belief about the Sikh Gurus is that they were all Hindus. I do not regard Sikhism as a
religion distinct from Hinduism. I regard it as a part of Hinduism and the reformation in the same sense that vaishnavism is. “(Young India dated 1.10.1925)

We will now take up the issues raised by those who call Sikhism a copy of Hinduism.

1. The Gurus were born in a Hindu family

The argument that since Guru Nanak was born in a Hindu family and moved among Hindu Saints he must have acquired spiritual instruction from a Hindu, does not make him a Hindu. It is erroneous to associate a person with the religion of his parents or teachers. Christ was born in a Jewish family but nobody calls him a Jew. Gautama Buddha was born in a Hindu family and was instructed by Hindu teachers but he was not a Hindu. All Muslims of India were once Hindus but nobody calls them Hindus now. Nostradamus was born in a Jewish family but died as a Christian.

As for birth, where could Guru Nanak have taken birth other than a Hindu family? There were only Hindus and Muslims in his time. If he were not born a Hindu he would still be a non-Sikh (Muslim, Buddh or Jain by birth).
2. The Gurus used Hindu vocabulary

The argument is fallacious. Languages do not belong to any particular religion. Any religious leader can use any language that the people understand. No religious leader in the world has ever invented a new language and a new vocabulary to preach his new religion. It is only natural for anybody to use the vocabulary of the language spoken around him and learnt by him from his parents and teachers. Islam has borrowed terminology from Christianity and Judaism but it will be wrong to say that Islam is a copy of those religions. It is interesting to know that Hindus call Guru Nanak a Hindu for using Hindu terminology and Muslims call him Muslim for using Persian and Arabic vocabulary. He has used thousands of Persian and Arabic words like Shaikh, Malik, Azrael, Dozakh, Rasool, Lehar, Musalman, Khuda, Allah, Rahim, Karim, Malaoon, Khaliq, Razaq, Sharik, Haq, Pak and Namaz etc, which are an anathema to the Hindus. Would the use of such Islamic vocabulary make him a Muslim? The Indian Hindus use thousands of English words like rail, ticket, signal, school, college, library, pen, pencil, button etc. can we call them English (or Christian?). The detractors forget that the Sikh Gurus have themselves declared that they are “neither Hindu nor Muslim” (GGS P.1136).

Malik Muhammad Jaisi wrote in Hindi all his life and used Hindu concepts, Hindi language and Hindi vocabulary but no Hindu has ever accepted him as a brother Hindu.

465 Read “Sat Bachan” by Mirza Ghulam Ahmed. Also read Hughes dictionary of Islam P.3, 6,30,124. Sewapanthis and Adanshahi Sikhs have utilised Persian mystical writings such as Masnavi of Jalal-ud-din Rumi. Imam Ghazali’s “Keemaya-e- Suadat ” was translated by them as भगवान सुशासन to propagate Sikhism among Muslims. The use of Islamic terms certainly does not guarantee an Islamic content (Dr.C.Shackel) It is interesting to note that the two diametrically opposing religions (Hinduism and Islam) both claim that Sikhism is a copy of their religions. Christians are not far behind.

466 It is worth noting that Hindus in general and Vaishnava Saints in particular did not like foreign languages and considered only Sanskrit as “Dev Bhasha”. For example Namdev suffered tortures but did not utter “Khuda”(Islamic word for God) "जूनेंत्र जैसी जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी हृदय धुला रेद्द || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी हृदय धुला रेद्द || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी हृदय धुला रेद्द || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी हृदय धुला रेद्द || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी हृदय धुला रेद्द || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी हृदय धुला रेद्द || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी हृदय धुला रेद्द || जैसें जैसी बोली भाभी || जैसें जैसी हृदय धुला रेद्द || (Pm 706). भक्तिक शब्द जैसे रामकेशर (मेघालाल अजमेरपाल)

148
3. The Gurus used Hindu Concepts

McLeod says that Guru Nanak only regurgitated the Hindu religious ideas prevalent in his time and did not lay the foundation of a different religion. He writes, “Guru Nanak may have founded a new panth or religious community within the larger Hindu fold, but he neither violated nor abandoned the Hindu tradition. Born a Hindu, he remained one until the day he died, and so too did his successors. Nanak did not found Sikhism for this would have meant founding something which already existed.” (‘The Sikhs’ page 16) It is ironic that the Hindu priests treated Guru Nanak as an outcaste and a heathen for declining to wear a Janeu, a necessary adjunct for Hindus, and yet Mr. McLeod says that Guru Nanak preached nothing new but Hinduism.

Every new religion relies on the current language and religious concepts and uses them as points of reference giving them new interpretations. It is true that Guru Nanak inherited all the wisdom of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Muslim thinkers before him but it does not mean that he gave us nothing new. Such a statement can be made about any religious leader of the world because some of his ideas and vocabulary can be traced back to other religions. Christianity did not invent any new language, vocabulary or concepts but used the same language and concepts as were prevalent among the Jews. Later Islam did the same. Religious terms like Guru, Nam, Bhana, Gurmukh, Shabat, Anhadnad, Mukti, Sadhu, Ram, Punn and Paap etc are indeed used both in Hinduism and Sikhism but their meanings and the concepts behind them are not the same. Some Hindu concepts like heaven, hell, and sin etc match with similar concepts in Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism but we cannot call them anything other than Hindus.
New religious leaders always give new interpretations to old established concepts. For example the word “Allah” was used for a ‘statue’ before Prophet Muhammad’s advent but afterwards it began to be used for God and Muslims became iconoclasts. The same thing applies to the Hindu concepts borrowed by the Sikh Gurus from the Vedas and other religious books. For example take the concept of “the Bull” which according to Hindus supports the earth. The Guru interpreted it as “Dharma” instead of an animal. The Hindus have numerous Devtas (gods) like Varuna, Mitra, Surya, Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, Agni, Indra, Rudra, Usha and numerous more mentioned in the Vedas but the Sikhs believe only in one God.

4. Sikhism and the Vedas

“The Granth Sahib of the Sikhs is actually based on the Hindu scriptures”. (Collected works of Mahatma Gandhi page 284)

To call Guru Granth Sahib based on the Hindu scriptures is a prejudgement and is absolutely wrong. Except for some ideas about God, which can be traced in any religion, the two have nothing much in common. Two prominent Hindu scholars have differentiated Guru Granth Sahib from the Hindu scriptures step by step. One of them is Swami Ram Tirath Dandi Sanyasi (who later accepted Sikhism) and wrote a book titled, “The best scripture, Guru Granth Sahib.” The other one is Swami Maheshwara Nand Mahan Mandleswar who wrote Chaturwarnya Bhartya Sameekhsha.

4. According to another Hindu belief there are eight elephants supporting the earth at eight different points. Their names are Anjan, Sarvabhoom, Vaman, Kumud, Pushpalant, Pundrik, Airavat and Supratik. Below them in the nether world there are other elephants to support them. Their names are Bhadra, Mahupadma, Saumanas and Virupakk. All of them are jointly known as Digaj.

469 The first of these books is now available in Panjabi translation (Gurmukh Panjabi) published by Gurmat Sahit Charitable Trust Amritsar. The second book is in Sanskrit. In part two it carries a chapter on Guru Gobind Singh titled Bhartiya Veeragargnayo Gobind Singh. No one has differentiated Sikhism from Hinduism better than these two scholars.
This topic has been discussed at length by Bhai Jodh Singh giving quotations from both Hindu and Sikh scriptures in his book titled “Guru Granth Sahib Ate Ved” (1911) and “Gurmat Nirnai” (1932). Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha has also written a book on the same topic titled “Ham Hindu Nahin” (1907).

5. The Gurus and the Sant Tradition

“The belief system promulgated by the Sants was gaining widespread currency and Nanak could have absorbed its ideals from a variety of possible sources. The fact that he faithfully reproduces these doctrines sets him firmly within the Sant tradition, effectively destroying any claims to significant originality.” (McLeod ‘The Sikhs page 23)

A casual reader of Sikhism can easily find that the goals and the procedures of the Sikh Gurus and those of the Hindu Sants were altogether different. The Sikh Gurus were monotheists as opposed to Hindu Sants who believed in a multitude of gods (stones, snakes, sun, idols, trees, moon, rats, cows, rivers, Lakshmi, fire, Durga, Shivling etc).\textsuperscript{470} The Hindu Sants considered the Yagyas sacred and very meritorious acts but the Sikh Gurus condemned them as wastage. It is indeed very odd that scholars like McLeod fail to grasp such glaring differences, which an ordinary reader does not fail to notice.

\textsuperscript{470} Shiva’s sexual organ (Shivling) is worshipped by Shaiv Hindus. On the other hand the Sikhs are instructed to put their faith only in one God. देवी वेदिः सत्य जीवं जीवं दर्शिः चूसि तेजस्मी सन्नि गच्छि जय यस्मि (कर्ण जोते)
The naked, ashes-clad Hindu Sadhu carrying a begging bowl and threatening people with esoteric powers is nowhere mentioned in Sikhism. The Sadhu of the Guru’s concept does not believe in outward attire (swash-buckling ochre coloured overall and frontal mark) or ritual activity. He is a householder earning his living through honest work and sharing it with less fortunate members of society.\(^{471}\) He neither threatens anybody nor feels cowed down by another’s threats.\(^{472}\) When the need falls he even picks up a sword to defend the righteous cause.\(^{473}\) It is unbelievable that McLeod failed to notice all this.

All Hindu Sants (with a few exceptions) believed in caste system,\(^{474}\) practised Ahimsa, hated women, supported Sati (co-cremation of widows with their dead husbands) and recommended pilgrimage to sacred rivers, whereas Guru Nanak disapproved all such practices. The Hindu Sants believed in the authority of the Vedas whereas Guru Nanak repudiated the Vedas, Upanishadas, and the Gita altogether.\(^{475}\) According to Hinduism God takes birth in the form of Avtars but Sikhism does not accept this view.

The Hindus and especially the Hindu Sants do not have one set philosophy. Their belief systems are numerous i.e. atheism, theism, dwaitism, adwaitism, Saivism, Vaishnavism, Krishna worship, Rama Worship, Durga worship etc. This is clearly evident from the writings of Madhva, Tulsidas, Vallabh, Chaitanya, Rama Nand, numerous Simrities, Brahmanas and Upanishadas etc, which contradict each other. The Sikhs on the other hand believe in one God and one set of principles and that is why in Guru Nanak’s religion we find a well-integrated and coherent systematised thought. “They do not recite the Mantras of the Hindus, they do not venerate their temples, nor do they esteem their Avtars. The

\(^{471}\) आचार में भिष्म: वापस चारों रंगरंग संभालनें अर्य (पं. स. 1244)
\(^{472}\) की चूके नहीं देगा गांव तिथिः कि है अर्यक अर्य (पं. स. 1620)
\(^{473}\) तब तूह चुप कमर का पार ही लिखत यह जी जोड़ जीजी अर्य (पं. स. 1620)
\(^{474}\) केंद्र ने वह चार रंग संभालने रंगे (दिया दिया मित्रजी आधारण: 44) भूमि भें वह आचार अर्य भें उदात्मक श्राद्ध देव है। (दिया मित्रजी आधारण: 44) कृष्णात्मक सब चाल की अभिनंदन देव है (भूमि मित्रजी आधारण 14) The reason why there are only a few Brahman Sikhs is that the Brahmans are forbidden from being baptised by any of the lower three classes. The Sikh Gurus were Kashatryas and therefore the Brahmans did not accept baptism from Guru Gobind Singh in any significant numbers.
\(^{475}\) महादेव न संभाल देव हैं। कुछ गीती न्यायी न्यायी न्यायी आचार्य न संभालित माता नंदी उपासी उपासी (पं. स. 546) सत्रुण्डक लाई किये वह की देस का कम संभालने की (पं. स. 546) भवनिक भें तुलसी नंदी अधिक माता में नंदी उपासी (पं. स. 642) वेद संभाल है। (पं. स. 642) कुछ माता में नंदी उपासी नंदी उपासी (पं. स. 642) आचार्य नंदी उपासी (पं. स. 40) "ब्रह्मात्मक देवीकल्याण हैं। ब्रह्मात्मक के अर्थ देवलिपि के सत्र लाई कहा हैं। तत्त्व देवलिपि सत्र लाई कहा हैं।" (भूमि मित्रजी आधारण 14)
Sanskrit language, which according to the Hindus is the language of the
gods, is not held in such great estimation by the Sikhs.”(Dabistan-e-
Mazahib by Mohsin Fani translated by David O Shea)

The theories of the Hindu Nath Yogis (Shaiva and Vaishnavas), who were
usually celibates, conflicted with those of Guru Nanak. Physical
austerities, self-torture, self-denial and renunciation are all cardinal
principles of Hindu Sants, which are condemned as fruitless by the Sikh
Gurus. The goal of the Naths and Yogis and most other Hindu Sants was
complete dissociation from the world through leading a monastic life
(Baan Prath Ashram) and thus gaining spiritual powers by wandering in
jungles whereas the Guru’s goal was to seek salvation while living a
normal life in society. 476

The Hindu Sants did not involve in worldly affairs, and neither did they
stress the importance of social reformation. They were more interested in
Mukti (salvation) after death whereas Sikhism believes in Mukti
achievable ‘here and now’. The concept of Jeevan-mukta was not their
concern and the eradication of social evils, injustice, cruelty or political
coercion and oppression did not bother them. No Hindu Sant spoke
against foreign invaders but Guru Nanak stood as a rock against the
powerful invader Babar and called him an aggressor, courted arrest and
served imprisonment. In this connection Ms Dorothy Field writes,

“Speaking generally, however, there was not sufficient combativeness
among these earlier reformers to lead to the formation of a powerful new
religion. They were too deeply imbued with poetic mysticism---with the
spirit of quietism and toleration---to have much sympathy with aggressive
ideals.”

The Hindu saints "appear to have been so impressed with nothingness of
this life, that they deemed the amelioration of man’s social condition as
unworthy of a thought. They aimed chiefly at emancipation from
priestcraft, or from the grossness of idolatory and polytheism. They formed
pious associations of contented quietists, or they gave themselves up to the
contemplation of futurity in the hope of approaching bliss, rather than
called upon their fellow creatures to throw aside every social as well as

476 भारतीय धर्मशास्त्र भूतियाँ इन्द्रियों विनाश तथा कुशल (पत्र ५२२)
477 “Matter and soul interact continually. The purer the mind, the freer the soul. In human form, the
cooperation of the two can reach its highest. The state of best cooperation between matter and soul
is the state of Jivan Mukt.”(Dr.Taran Singh The Missionary Vol.1 No. 3 Page 146)
religious trammel, and to raise a new people freed from debasing corruption of ages. They perfected forms of dissent rather than planted the germs of nations, and their sects remained to this day as they left them. It was reserved for Nanuk to perceive the true principles of reform, and to lay those broad foundations which enabled his successor Govind to fire the mind of his countrymen with a new nationality, and to give practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest, in race as in creed, in political as in religious hopes.” (J.D. Cunningham A history of the Sikhs)

6. Hindu gods are mentioned in the Granth Sahib

Regarding the mention of the names of Hindu gods, goddesses and historical Hindu personages in the Granth Sahib it should be noted that like all Indians the Gurus lived in India and inherited their language and culture from the past ancestors and forefathers of Indian people. Therefore naturally they mentioned the virtues and shortcomings of past religious leaders but instead of worshipping them, they mentioned them as ordinary human beings with usual human weaknesses.

Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Rama, Ravana, Kans, Jashodha, Dhruv, Prahlad and many others are mentioned as a survival element of the prevalent religion and not as worshipful incarnations of God. For example examine the following hymns:

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478 Guru Granth Sahib gives credit where it is due. For example Dhruv and Prahlad are praised for being sincere devotees of God without questioning whether they really existed or not. Guru Granth Sahib gives credit where it is due. For example Dhruv and Prahlad are praised for being sincere devotees of God without questioning whether they really existed or not.

479 The mention of the names of Hindu gods, goddesses and historical Hindu personages in the Granth Sahib should be noted that like all Indians the Gurus lived in India and inherited their language and culture from the past ancestors and forefathers of Indian people. Therefore naturally they mentioned the virtues and shortcomings of past religious leaders but instead of worshipping them, they mentioned them as ordinary human beings.

480 Hindu gods and goddesses (Avatars) are mentioned in the Sikh scripture only as mortals like other human beings.

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(a) “Branded with a thousand marks of disgrace, *Indra* cried in shame. *Paras Raam* returned home crying. *Ajai* cried and wept when he was made to eat the manure he had given, pretending it was charity. Such is the punishment received in the Court of the Lord. *Rama* wept when he was sent into exile, and separated from *Sita* and *Lakhshman*. The ten-headed *Raawan*, who stole away *Sita* with the beat of his tambourine, wept when he lost Sri Lanka. The *Paandavas* once lived in the Presence of the Lord; they were made slaves, and wept. *Janmayjaa* wept because he had lost his way. One single mistake made him a sinner.”

(b) *Brahma* acted in pride, and did not reform. Only when he was faced with the problem of the Vedas did he repent. Remembering God in meditation, the mind is conciliated. Such is the horrible pride of the world. The Guru eliminates the pride of those who meet Him. *Bal* the King, steeped in mammon and egotism held his ceremonial feasts, but he was puffed up with pride. Without the Guru’s advice, he had to go to the underworld. *Hari Chand* gave in charity, and earned public praise. But without the Guru, he did not find the limits of the Mysterious Lord. The Lord Himself misleads people for their propensities, and He Himself imparts them understanding.

The evil-minded *Harnaakhash* committed evil deeds. God, the Lord of all, is the destroyer of pride. He bestowed His Mercy, and saved *Prabhaad*. *Raawan* was deluded, foolish and unwise. Sri Lanka was plundered, and he lost his head. He indulged in ego, and lacked the love of the True Guru. The Lord killed the thousand-armed *Arjun*, and the demons *Madhu-keetab* and *Mehkhaasaa*. He seized *Harnaakhash* and tore him apart with his nails. The demons were slain because they did not practice devotional worship. The demons *Jaraa-sandh* and *Kaal-jamun* were destroyed. *Rakat-beej* and *Kaal-naym* were annihilated. Slaying the demons, the Lord saved His Saints.” (AGGS page 224)

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482 शरण द्वारा छंद हैं विरेखाविनिमित्रोऽस्मात्……………………………………. "(प्रेम्ग ३५४-३५५)

483 "यदृच्छ वृद्ध शीतल नदी सरिता। केवल की फिरविद यही निपुण तीर्थिका।" (प्रेम्ग २२१) यदृच्छ वृद्ध किन्तु न निपुण (प्रेम्ग २२२) यदृच्छ वृद्ध निपुण लीर्तिका में निपुण (प्रेम्ग २२५) यदृच्छ वृद्ध निपुण तीर्थिका (प्रेम्ग २३५)
The Hindu personalities and gods had to be mentioned to expose the myths attached with them.\textsuperscript{484} Such Hindu names mentioned in the Granth do not make the Sikhs become Hindus because similar mention of personalities from other religions has also found place in the Granth.\textsuperscript{485} The Gurus mention Hindu or Muslim personalities to comment on their teachings and to rationalize their own approach to religion. The ancient mythical tales are mentioned only for the purposes of illustrating some moral or spiritual truths because people had been fed on these tales for centuries. For example when \textit{Harnaakhash} is mentioned, the lesson drawn is “Pride has a fall” and no respect is shown to \textit{Harnaakhash} or his religious preceptor \textit{Vishnu}. When \textit{Prahlad} and \textit{Dhruv} are mentioned, the aim is to propagate the virtue associated with them.

Recently some Hindu scholars have started quoting Dasam Granth and say that Guru Gobind Singh himself admitted that his father died for the protection of the Hindus. They quote the lines “\textit{दिलार लेंगे नथा धारा उजागर । कौन चढ़े वजु भांगे समर}”. It should be remembered in the first instance that the authorship of Dasam Granth has never been conclusively confirmed. Again the sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur was for protecting the Sants (be they Hindu, Muslims, Christians or of any other denomination) not for any particular religion. The same Dasam Granth clearly states, “\textit{मा जाहे देउ दिखी निह लौँ । मीम रीणा धर धी तें डिक्स ली}” (He acted on behalf of the Sants and laid down his life without an excuse). The lines quoted above cannot be applied to Hindu \textit{Sadhus} alone. If the people of another religion were in danger the Guru would still have laid down his life. One wonders how these scholars interpret Guru Gobind Singh’s letter written to Emperor Aurangzeb in which he clearly mentions the difference between Hinduism and Sikhism by saying, “\textit{They worship statues but I am an iconoclast}.”\textsuperscript{486}

\textsuperscript{484} The fact is that here and there the Guru even denies their existence. \textit{हुण्डः फादनर भवसु र राई} (1035)
\textsuperscript{485} \textit{बहुबल अवसु र पिली तिहली} (पंक्ति 175)
\textsuperscript{486} \textit{मन कुमार भवसु र टेंग तिहली} (Verse 95)
16.4 Views of Western writers

It is a fact that when a critic looks at another religion through his own established beliefs he is sure to develop a jaundiced outlook instead of grasping the deep spiritual content of the religion under his microscope. Most of the criticism by westerners stems from their study of the Bible. Since Bible is history they treat Sikh religion as history instead of philosophy and place Sikhism in a bracket with Hindu Bhagti movement (Sant tradition) and find nothing new in it. They conveniently ignore that in the field of religions the kernel is ‘Spiritual element’, which needs to be studied not the apocryphal literature (like *Janam Sakhis*) which accumulates around religions as they grow.

The western writers deliberately, omit a very important fact that the Hindus hated the Muslims and did not use anything touched by a Muslim. On the other hand we find that a large number of Muslims joined the Sikhs. Guru Nanak’s lifetime friend Mardana was a Muslim. Later Guru Ram Das appointed Allah Yar Khan as one of the *Masands*.

Guru Har Gobind had a mosque built for Muslims at Har Gobind Pur. According to Macauliffe Emperor Shah Jehan asked Wazir Khan why a Hindu Guru had built a mosque for the Muslims to which Wazir Khan replied, “Sire, Gurus and Pirs are all men’s property. They feel neither love nor hate. He looketh on Hindus and Mohammedans with an equal eye.” A similar mosque for Muslims was caused to be built by Banda Bahadur at Kanhwan. Guru Hargobind’s army, Guru Gobind Singh’s army, and that of Banda Singh enlisted so many Muslim soldiers. These facts are sufficient to explode the myth that Sikhism is an offshoot of Hinduism.

487 For example Mahatma Gandhi, influenced deeply as he was by Hinduism, considered intercaste-marriages and inter-dining as “superstition borrowed from the West.” Ironically he preached equality among all castes and called the low castes as *Harijans* (God’s own) but not for inter-dining and inter-marriage.

488 “Lives of Baba Nanak called *Janam Sakhis*, are very common but they are so full of fable and invention, displaying such intense ignorance, that they are more calculated to deceive than instruct.” (R.N. Cust “The life of Baba Nanak, the founder of *Sikh sect*”(1860 AD))

489 In the pre-divided India (before 1947) there used to be two pitchers of water for the public at all Railway stations one for the Hindus and the other for the Muslims. If a Muslim touched a Hindu even by accident, the Hindu had to wash in the Ganges to purify himself.

490 Sayad Buddhu Shah, Said Beg, Maimu Khan, Qazi Pir Muhammad, Nabi Khan, Ghani Khan, Bhikhwan Shah and Saeen Mian Meer were all associated with the Sikh Gurus. On the other hand Hindus like Lakhpat Rai, Gangu Brahman, Chandu, Sucha Nan and Hindu chiefains opposed the Sikh movement.
Some people have been heard saying that prior to the advent of the Singh Sabha movement, all Sikhs obeyed the Hindu rituals and laws. Sir Lapel Griffin refutes this as follows: “The Sikhs had abandoned the Hindu faith, and with it the system of law which is the basis of that faith, and which is inseparable from it. For a hundred and fifty years they had been governed as far as chiefships were concerned, by another code altogether, and it was as reasonable for them to refer to Manu and the Shastras as the source of legal authority, as it would have been for Mohammedans, who had embraced Sikhism to appeal to the Shara.” (The Rajas of the Punjab P. 338).

“Sikhism is of course Hindu in so far as it is Indian in origin, yet even in the time of the third Guru the Hindus recognised it as quite separate from their own creed and a little later Fani, of Muslim origin, declared it to be separate equally from Islam”. (Duncan Greenlees. ‘The Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib P.171) Elsewhere he writes, “Sikhism is not a reproduction of earlier religions, but a profound modification of them so profound that it cannot critically be regarded otherwise than as a new revelation altogether.” (P. CLXXI)

16.5 A religion in its own right

Guru Nanak’s religion is a full-fledged independent religion in its own right. It has outlived the Sant tradition and is the living faith of the 21st century whereas the Sant tradition remains confined to books. No Hindu tradition resulted in the formation of an organisation like the Khalsa, which is the culmination of Guru Nanak’s logical thoughts. If anything the Sikh Gurus completely wiped off the influence of the Hindu Sants, Sidhas and Yogis from the public mind in spite of the fact that the former commanded a very great influence on the popular minds of the people of India. Guru Nanak wrote: “The Hindus are fundamentally in error. Having missed the right path they wander in utter darkness. Narad instructed them to worship idols and statues. This made them spiritually blind and dumb. In foolishness they worship stones. The stone gods themselves sink, how can they help them cross the ocean of life”. (AGGS page 556)\footnote{\begin{quote} \text{\textit{हिंदू भूले कृष्ण महादेव प्रजनी \ नराद की श्रोता है। अपनी श्रद्धा में वह स्तुति करता। भक्ति का रचना स्वयं वह झुकता।}\\
\text{गुरु नानक के द्वारा स्वयं चुमे तथ्रू करते हैं। तेरह मंदिर स्तुति रूपमें गर्म करते हैं।}\\
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A careful study of the essentials of Hinduism and Sikhism will prove that similarities between the two are only skin deep and dissimilarities are more pronounced and numerous. The metaphysics, the social and ritual reformation, and the goals of the two religions are miles apart. Hinduism prohibited travel out of the country but Guru Nanak visited countries outside India preaching his mission and converting Muslims, Christianity and Buddhists. On the other hand the Hindus considered the Muslims as Malechhas and never re-converted even those Hindus who had been forced to accept Islam. A Hindu Nanak could not have touched, much less eat, Muslim food, and drink the water of Arabia.

We quote hereunder the opinions of some other historians:

1. Niharanjan Ray “To be able to achieve the integration of temporal and spiritual seems to have been the most significant contribution of Guru Nanak to the totality of the Indian way of life of medieval India. Indeed, he seems to have reared up a new image of a socio-religious community given at once to temporal and spiritual pursuits of life as against the earlier view that temporal and the material were set in opposition to the eternal or perennial and the spiritual. Worldly life was considered to be a hindrance, if not positively hostile and antagonistic to a life of the spirit.”

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492 “The Guru after his pleasant visit to Shaikh Braham and his district, where he made several converts proceeded to a country called Bisia Bushahit.”(Sikh Religion Mcauliffe P.93) In Kiri Pathan di he converted a number of Muslim Pathans to Sikhism (ibid p.108). For further instances of conversions by Guru Nanak read “Sikhism” by Professor Teja Singh Pages 87-96
2. **Ms Dorothy Field** in her book “The Religion of the Sikhs” writes, “The word Hinduism is undoubtedly capable of a wide application, but it is questionable whether it should be held to include the Sikhs in view of the fact that the pure teachings of the Guru assumed a critical attitude towards the three cardinal pillars of Hinduism, the priesthood, the caste system and the Vedas.” She further writes, “It is essentially a practical religion. If judged from the pragmatical standpoint—a favourable point of view in some quarters—it would rank almost first in the world. Of no other religion can it be said that it has made a nation in so short a time. Pure Sikhism is far above dependence on Hindu rituals and is capable of a distinct position as a world religion so long as Sikhs maintain their distinctiveness.”

3. **Mr. M.A. Macauliffe** writes, “Unlike the scriptures of other creeds, they do not contain love stories or accounts of wars waged for selfish considerations. They contain sublime truths, the study of which cannot but elevate the reader spiritually, morally and socially………. It would be difficult to point to a religion of greater originality or to a more comprehensive ethical system.”

He also writes, “It (Sikhism) rejected Hindu formularies and adopted an independent ethical system, ritual, and standards which were totally opposed to the theological beliefs of Guru Nanak’s age and country.”

4 **Mohsin Fani** (a contemporary of Guru Har Gobind) in his book Dabistan-e-Mazahab writes, “The Sikhs do not have any faith in the ritual and ceremonies enjoined by the Hindu Shastras, nor do they observe any superstitious restrictions about dining.”

5. **Sujan Rai of Batala** in his book Khulasat-ul-Tawarikh (1697 AD) writes, “The only way of worship with them (the Sikhs) is that they read the hymns composed by their Gurus and sing them sweetly in accompaniment with musical instruments.”

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493 byd kqyb iePqrw BweI idl kw iPkru n jwie (pMnw 72 7) byd kqyb isimRiq siB swsq ien@ piVAw mukiq n
hoeI (pMnw 747) byd pVy piV bRhmy hwry ieku iqlu nhI kImiq pweI (pMnw 747) byd pVy piV bRhmy jnmu
gvwieAw  (pMnw 478)

494 ihMdU Drm qoN v`Kry Drm vwly is`KW nUM ihMdU mMnxw mhW mUrKqw hY  (srvoqm Drm g RMQ suAwmI rwm qIrQ pMnw
77)

160
It is a fact that right from the time of Guru Nanak Sikhism developed as a distinctive entity. Guru Nanak openly rejected the Hindu formalism and the Hindu value system when he declined to wear the Hindu sacred thread (Janeu) and criticised Hindu rituals.\textsuperscript{495} Later Guru Amar Das was exempted by the Mughal Government from paying the pilgrimage tax imposed on the Hindus on the ground that his followers were not Hindus.\textsuperscript{496} The Sikh Gurus have made numerous statements claiming that they were neither Hindus nor Muslims.\textsuperscript{497} The apparent semblance of commonality between the two religions is no proof that they coincide in all respects. Some of the clear differences can be summarised as follows.

\begin{itemize}
  \item a. Sikhism rejects the authority of the Vedas & Puranas.\textsuperscript{498}
  \item b. Sacrifices, Havan, and Hom etc are discarded\textsuperscript{499}
  \item c. Renunciation is replaced by Home life
  \item d. Caste (Waran Ashram) distinctions are not valued
  \item e. No language is considered sacred.\textsuperscript{500} All languages are equally valued.
  \item f. Sikhism rejects the Avtara theory of reincarnation of God.
  \item g. Worship of a personal god or statue is considered wastage of time.\textsuperscript{501}
  \item h. Observing fasts and putting frontal marks has no value.
\end{itemize}

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\end{itemize}
i. Pilgrimage, salvation (after death), non-violence, Nature worship (Air, fire etc), Ancester worship, Brahamcharya, Yoga and other Hindu rituals are rejected in Sikhism.

Sikhism has its own history, its own scripture, its own originators and its own language. All these combine to make it a religion in its own right.

"..."
Chapter Seventeen
They gave their heads

A question is usually asked to explain if Guru Gobind Singh really cut off the heads of the *five Pyaras*. Before we discuss this issue we should note the following important points:

1. That all Sikh Gurus followed the Principles of Gurbani and lived their lives according to the *Hukam* of the Almighty. No Guru contradicted Gurbani through word or deed.

2. The meaning of removing the head does not always mean cutting off the head and replacing it with another one.

3. The Sikhs are required to follow the Guru’s advice and not to question him or pry into his secrets.

17.1 What does it mean?

Plato wrote, “The whole life of the philosopher is a preparation for death. For what we do when we remove the soul from pleasure—that is to say, from body, from private property (the body’s agent and servant) from public affairs and from every kind of private business."

The Gurus have written at various places in the Granth about removing the head and serving the Lord.

502 भी उक्तनमस्तुक हेमा भा दिवसविंचि हि भक्त रहम चेहरे भी धा निदेश नुसी शरण च चबा जै है (नाती तवर सुक) = भी ज्ञानी हेमा भी निदेश नुसी शरण च चबा जै है (नाती तवर सुक)।

“अभियोग नही तक सोहा भक्ति भक्ति भक्तिः को भक्ति ने जब सोहा भक्ति भक्ति भक्तिः” - भी उक्तनमस्तुक हेमा भी निदेश नुसी ने जब सोहा भक्ति भक्ति भक्तिः।

"ने सतर्क निदेश भक्ति भक्ति भक्ति भक्तिः" - (उक्तनमस्तुक)।
For example Guru Nanak writes: “Cutting off my head, I give it to Him to sit upon; Thus becoming headless, I serve Him.”\textsuperscript{503} Literally speaking if a head is cut off then the cadaver cannot do any service.

Guru Angad Dev says, “Chop off the head that does not bow to the Lord.”\textsuperscript{504} One wonders if he himself literally chopped off anybody’s head.

Guru Amar Das says, “It is very difficult to serve the True Guru. offer your head; give up your ego.”\textsuperscript{505}

Guru Ram Das wrote, “The True Guru has mercifully united me with God. Cutting off my head, and chopping it into pieces, I offer it to Him.”\textsuperscript{506}

Guru Arjan Dev wrote, “I offer my head to that beloved friend, who brings me news of God.”\textsuperscript{507}

Baba Farid wrote “Rise up, Farid, and cleanse yourself; chant your morning prayer. A head, which does not bow to the Lord — chop off and remove that head. That head which does not bow to the Lord — what is to be done with that head? Put it in the fireplace, in place of firewood.”\textsuperscript{508}

Obviously neither Baba Farid himself nor any Guru literally acted upon this advice and removed his physical head. Therefore it is clear that giving...
away the head does not mean physically severing the head from the body. Our head is the controlling headquarters of our body where ideas are created and from where actions are directed to be performed. If the head is cut off we physically die.

Bhai Nand Lal wrote: “The journey of love is arduous. The weak cannot trudge on it. However if you give away your head and then walk, the journey becomes easy.” We know that Bhai Nand Lal did give away his head in the spiritual sense but it was not a physical head. In religion this sort of giving is absolutely necessary. The Guru says, “Only those achieve salvation who accept death through the Guru’s Shabad.”

Religious leaders of almost all religions have used this phrase. In religious parlance cutting off a head or offering a head means becoming egoless and submitting to the Guru completely. Doing away with past thoughts, behaviour, weaknesses, beliefs, attractions and allegiances and thus reposing complete and unshakable faith in the Guru’s word. In Gurbani such a person is called ਜੀਵਨ ਮੁਕ੍ਕੁਂ (Living liberated) or ਜੀਵਨ-ਮੰਡਰ (Living dead). Another similar phrase that has been used by most of the religious preceptors is “selling the head.”

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509 ਚੈਕੀ ਲਾਟਾ ਦਿਕਾ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਆਖਣਾ ਕੁਰੱ ਤੱਤ੍ਵ ਹੋਵੇਂ ਹੋਵੇਂ, ਮਾਨ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਨਾ ਕਿ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਹੋਣ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੁਹੰਨ (ਜੈਵਨ ਰਸ ੭੬੯) “ਮੁਹੰ ਕਾਰਨ ਮੁਹੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ (ਜੈਵਨ ਰਸ ੭੬੯) ਹੋਵੇਂ ਹੋਵੇਂ, ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ (ਜੈਵਨ ਰਸ ੭੬੯) ਹੋਵੇਂ ਹੋਵੇਂ, ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ (ਜੈਵਨ ਰਸ ੭੬੯) ਹੋਵੇਂ ਹੋਵੇਂ, ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ ਮੂੰਨ (ਜੈਵਨ ਰਸ ੭੬੯)

510 ਸੂਤ੍ਰ ਸ਼ੇਖਰ ਸਤਸੰਗ ਤੁਰਕੀ ਸੰਨ ਸਤਕ (ਜੀਵਨ ਰਸ ੮੨) ਸੰਨ ਸਤਕ ਸੰਨ ਸਤਕ ਸੰਨ ਸਤਕ (ਜੀਵਨ ਰਸ ੮੨)

511 ਦੋਹੇ ਦੀ ਮੰਨੀ ਤੇ ਅਕਸ ਮੰਨੀ ਤੇ ਮੰਨੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂਕਤ (ਗੌਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ) ਸੰਨ ਸੰਨ ਸੰਨ ਸੰਨ ਸੰਨ (ਪ੍ਰਫਰ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ)

512 The famous English poet John Milton calls it, “body working up to spirit”. (paradise Lost v) The Holy Bible states, “ It is sown a natural body and is raised a spiritual body”. (I Corinthians xv,44)

513 ਹੁਣ ਆਖਣ ਹੁਣ ਆਖਣ ਹੁਣ ਆਖਣ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ (ਜੀਵਨ ਰਸ ੨੦) ਹੁਣ ਆਖਣ ਹੁਣ ਆਖਣ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ (ਜੀਵਨ ਰਸ ੨੦)

514 ਗੁਰੁ ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਸੰਕਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ (ਪ੍ਰਫਰ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ) ਸੰਕਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ (ਪ੍ਰਫਰ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ) ਸੰਕਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ (ਪ੍ਰਫਰ ਪ੍ਰਫਰ)
Obviously when something is sold it ceases to belong to us and becomes the property of the purchaser. Guru Nanak says, “I have sold my body and mind to the Guru, and I have given away my mind along with my head. (P.20)\textsuperscript{515}

Guru Amar Das says, “They place mind, body and wealth in offering before the Guru, and sell their heads to Him. (P.1413)\textsuperscript{516}

Guru Ram Das says, “The Perfect Guru has revealed the Lord to me. I have sold my head to the Guru. (P.169)\textsuperscript{517}

Selling the head or cutting off the head carry the same meaning. They mean complete surrender to the Guru to expect his approval.\textsuperscript{518} When this happens the Guru obliterates the past and offers a new direction to the novitiate. It is like washing the vessel thoroughly before using it for carrying fresh milk.\textsuperscript{519}

“The Guru’s follower is only the one who cuts off his head and places it before the Guru.”

“While we are still alive, this will mean imitation of heavenly life: once we are free from our chains here, our souls will run their race slowly. For those who have been shackled to the flesh make slower progress even when they are released. It is as if they have spent many years in manacles. Once we have arrived at the other place, and only then, we shall live. For this life is truly death and I could, if I would, weep for it.” (CICERO by Anthony Everitt page 247)

\textsuperscript{515} qnu mnu gur pih vyicAw mnu dIAw isru nwil (pMnw 20)
\textsuperscript{516} mnu qnu Dnu AwgY rwiKAw isru vyicAw gur AwgY jwie (pMnw 1413)
\textsuperscript{517} hir hir pRgtu kIE guir pUrY isru vyicE gur pih molI (pMnw 169) kir ikrpw nwnk myil gur pih isru vyicAw molIAw (pMnw 311) aun siqgur AwgY sIsu n byicAw Eie Awvih jwih ABwgy (pMnw 172) ijsu hir Awip ik®pw kry so vycy isru gur AwgY (pMnw 167) jn nwnk kI lj pwiq gurU hY isru byicE siqgur Awgy (pMnw 172)
\textsuperscript{518} siqgur AwgY sIsu Byt dyau jy siqgur swcy BwvY (pMnw 1114) siqgur AwgY sIsu Dryie (pMnw 1261)
\textsuperscript{519} BWfw Doie bYis DUpu dyvhu qau dUDY kau jwvhu (pMnw 728) mnu Arpau Dnu rwKau AwgY mn kI miq moih sgl iqAwgI (pMnw 204)
17.2 Their heads were chopped off

The incident that took place on the Baisakhi of March 31, 1699 AD\textsuperscript{520} brought together people of various castes, creeds, beliefs and social standing on one platform. These people worshiped myriads of objects. It was not an easy task to challenge their beliefs and bring them round to accept a new belief system, which negated their long-held faith and required them to be fearless. Guru Gobind Singh performed this miracle and brought people round to worship only one God and no other gods, goddesses or powers of nature. At that time it was an impossibility, which the Guru turned into a possibility. He not only obliterated their mutual hatred and prejudices but also made them sip \textit{Amrit} from the same bowl and dine together. Over and above this he removed their fears and cowardice and turned them from cowards into doughty warriors. The Government had banned the beating of a drum and the carrying of a sword but the so-called riff raff of society became so bold after taking baptism (\textit{Amrit}) that they began beating a drum every morning and evening and even carried the swords. The sparrows had really become bold to kill the hawks. The cowards lost their cowardly heads and were given new heads that worshipped one God, hated caste divisions, raised voice against tyranny, refused to accept injustice, helped the needy, and faced the onslaughts of foreign invaders. The kings cowered before their might. It was indeed a miracle the like of which had never before happened in the history of the world. Old heads had been symbolically removed and replaced with new heads.

Some people have invented fantastic stories about the Guru’s action. They claim that the Guru killed five goats inside the tent.\textsuperscript{521} This is ridiculous. No contemporary or semi-contemporary writer has mentioned anything like this and five goats cannot be expected to sit still in a confined space without bleating.

A teacher teaches the students for a year and then sets an examination paper. He does not disclose his paper before the test.

The Sikh Gurus had been teaching their philosophy of complete surrender

\textsuperscript{520} These days Baisakhi is celebrated on the 13\textsuperscript{th} of April because of changes in the Gregory calender.
\textsuperscript{521} See Indu Bhushan Bannerjee “Evolution of the Khalsa” Part 2 page 113
for nearly 230 years. The creation of the Khalsa in 1699 AD was the final test to find if their teaching had gone home to their students. The Guru’s followers must therefore remember what the Guru says about such tests, “Do those deeds which the Guru has ordained. Do not pry into the Guru’s actions. O Nanak, through the Guru’s Teachings, merge in the True Lord. (AGGS P.933)\(^{522}\). He further says, “Nanak is a sacrifice unto those who behave in the way the True Guru wants them to behave.”(SAGGS page 1415)
Chapter Eighteen
Questions

Q1. God saved Prahlad. Why did He not save Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur?

Answer: The mythical stories in different religions cannot be taken at their face value. We cannot be sure whether the people mentioned in these stories actually existed. Even otherwise the stories, if taken as true, present many quandaries. For example the Hindus consider that Krishna was God, who could miraculously save Daropadi being disrobed but he could neither save his sect (Yadvas) from destruction nor save himself from an ordinary hunter who killed him. But Brahma is considered the all-powerful Creator of the Universe and produced four Vedas but his Vedas were snatched away from him by the demons and he was helpless against them. Lakshman died of a curse. Raja Darsath came back from heaven to accept barley flour dumplings from Sita. Savitri contrived to bring back her dead husband Satyavan from the land of the dead. Such mythical stories strain our credulity. Here we find people taking birth from cowdung or through wind, humans turning into stones, Rishis drinking the water of all the world oceans or churn them, moon turning into a cockerel, humans living for millions of years, people having thousands of children, sun being stopped from rising and mountains being carried on the hands of humans. Bawan Avtar was only 52 fingers breadth tall but he expanded himself into a terrific size to cover the whole universe in three steps.

523 यदि कृष्ण गुड है तो कैसे है उसके भ्रष्ट हमारे, भ्रष्ट है उसके द्रव्यमल में, यदि उसके भ्रष्ट है तो उसके रूप भ्रष्ट है, भूत भ्रष्ट है जिसमें भ्रष्ट है जिसके भ्रष्ट है भूत और भ्रष्ट है जिसके भ्रष्ट है जिसके भ्रष्ट है (ज्ञातमल- २७६). "If Krishna was God how could a hunter kill God with an arrow? If he was God then how come he had Devki as his mother? God has no parents. If he could save Daropadi why was his own race completely destroyed?"

524 यदि ज्ञातमल भ्रष्ट है तो साधन तर्क को विचार देंगे कैसे धर्मकेश (प्रतिरूप) विद्वान सं नहीं धर्म किसी भी धर्म किसी भी धर्म २६ (ज्ञातमल- १७१) (Can God have ego? Were the demons more powerful than Brahma, the creator of the Universe?). Here the Guru refers to the universally accepted god Brahma of the Hindus but it does not mean that such a person really existed. If he did then the Guru would not
Nobody bothers to tell us when and where these mythical personalities lived and whether humans can really perform such actions. Christ is said to have worked miracles all through his life but proved helpless when he was on the cross. A simple miracle at the cross could have made him immortal and spread his religion instantly throughout the world.

Nobody has so far proved that Dhruv and Prahlad really existed and if so when and where but we go on relating their stories to deduce meaningful lessons from them. Some intellectual persons may have invented their stories to inculcate and strengthen religious devotion in their followers. If Dhruva and Prahlad really survived death where are they now? If they eventually died then what was the point of their showing miracles? As far as we can go in recorded history we know that God never saved anyone unless the individual himself acted in his defence. The renowned Muslim faqir Sarmad was killed in Delhi, Shibli was stoned to death, Shamas Tabrez was flayed alive, Mansur –al-Hallaj died on stake (922 AD), and Gursikhs like Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Subeg Singh, Bhai Shahbaz Singh, Baba Banda Singh all died although they were spiritually very advanced.

He has employed millions of Brahmas for creation “or वे में सृजन तीजित भगवान भ्रमण (प्रथम 1156)”. In Hindu mythology chronology is conspicuous by its absence. Any god can be mentioned anytime. Ramayan tells us that Brahma used to come to eulogise Ram Chandra who lived in Tretayuga. The same Brahma is then mentioned in Bhagwat Puran as having stolen Krishna’s cows. Krishna lived in Duaparyuga. The time gap is thousands of years if not millions. Brahma may still be alive somewhere.

Sukracarya brought a group of dead people back to life. Dhanvantri is said to have brought a dead man back to life from the grave after many days.

Hanuman was the son of Air (वायु मुनि). He lifted a mountain. Karn was the son of Sun (सूर्य मुनि). Bhim was the son of Vayu (wind) and Arjan was the son of Indra and they were all born without the agency of their father to Kunti through a Mantra (incantation) given by Rishi Durvasa to Kunti. Kunti’s husband Pandu was cursed by Rishi Kindam and could not go near his wives. If he did he was cursed to die immediately.

Due to a curse Gautam’s wife has turned into a stone. O Raghubir she seeks the dust of your lotus feet and your kindness to turn her into human once again.

Milk ocean was churned by the gods and demons assisted by Kurma (a tortoise) using a sanke as a rope. Nectar of immortality and a cow etc came out in the process (see the opening pages of Agni Purana).

Mun had 7000 sons and was the ruler of Narkasur, which he had controlled by tying a rope round it. Krishna cut the rope with his chakra (quote) and killed him. Raja Sagar of Ayodhya had 60,000 sons.

Mansur suffered perhaps the longest torture. He was imprisoned and tortured for years, then fastened to a cross (922 AD). He was then scourged with 1000 stripes. At last his hands were cut off, his feet were gouged out from their sockets, then his tongue was removed. Lastly his head was severed from his body and the corpse was burned and thrown in river.
In Christianity Jesus, John Huss (1369-1415AD) and Joan of Arc were burnt alive but God did not come to their rescue. In Judaism Aqiba (130AD) suffered martyrdom for preaching the Torah. In 390 BC the Greek philosopher Socrates was poisoned to death. The Parsi prophet Zoroaster laid down his life (583BC). We cannot say that God is capricious in that He saves some children (like Dhruv and Prahalad) or only Hindus and does not save the other devotees. The fact is that even if somebody had really come to save spiritually awake Sants, they would have declined to be saved. Such spiritual people die for a cause or a principle, which is dearer to them than their lives.532

Nobody has conquered death.533 This is the law of the Almighty. Brave men die for a noble cause but cowards die without achieving anything. The deaths of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur were for noble causes and have made them immortal. They were given the option to save their lives by abjuring their faith but they declined and died a hero’s death. To die in defence of principles is something that started in India only with the advent of the Sikh Gurus. No example of such heroic death can be found in the history of India before the period of the Sikh Gurus. Such death is immortal life. The Gurus were martyrs in the real sense. It is not death that makes one a martyr, it is the principle that does.534 Just as the rank and file in the army are under oath to obey the orders of their general, the Gurus consider it obligatory to submit to the divine Will of their commander (God) and lay down their lives for upholding His cause.

Again it is worth noting that Daropadi, Prahlad, Dhruv, Christ and many other religious personalities mentioned in the religious texts of the world asked God for help when they were in trouble. The Sikh Gurus did not ask God for help. They knew what they were doing and why. Their sacrifices were not in vain. The sacrifices of no other religious personage brought about similar results as those of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Tigris. God did not save him from this ghastly murder but Jalal-ud-din Roomi calls him “The glory of religion.”

532 “Happiness does not spring from physical or mental pleasures, but from development of reason and adjustment of conduct to the principles” ("How to live 24 hours a day" Mr. Arnold Bennett)
533 जिसे आत्मनिर्भर से ना ले सवारी (पंज 1962) से आत्मनिर्भर से ना ले सवारी ना ले सवारी ना ले सवारी (पंज 1962) हम ले तो भूले । अधिक होई अपनी अपनी सबूत उपहार। (पंज 1962) भारत भारत भारत (पंज 29) भारत भारत भारत भारत (पंज 1962) "जिसे आत्मनिर्भर से ना ले सवारी ना ले सवारी ना ले सवारी। उन्हें देव दारित्व ग्रहण करते हुए उन्हें दारित्व दिलाने भक्त।" (पंज 1962)
534 भारत भारत गुरुजी ग्रहण करते हुए उन्हें देव दारित्व दिलाने भक्त। (पंज 1962)
Their sacrifices immortalized them and resulted in the birth of the mighty Khalsa, which shook the mighty Moghul Empire to its roots.

Q2. I understand that according to Sikhism human Soul has no sex. Since it is our soul that goes back to God, there cannot be any sin in Sikhism for involving in homosexuality. Am I right? Has God outlined any punishments for gays and lesbians?

Sikhism does not condone sexual abnormalities like homosexuality and extra-marital relationships. There are a lot of hymns in the holy Granth where too much involvement even in permissible heterosexual sex is described as a great disease and is condemned. A Sikh is expected to observe internal as well as external controls on sexual desire. It should not be curbed but it should also not be made a master either. The Guru advises sublimation (moderation).

You say that ‘Soul’, which goes back to God, has no sex and therefore homosexuality is no sin. Your statement is disputacious and polemical. We do not know whether soul has a sex or not. What we know for certain is that sexuality does exist in life and there is no life without sex. If all life is part of God, as most religions believe, and God has given us sex, then there must be some purpose in equipping the living beings with sexuality. The Sikh belief is that God is self-born and human beings are a part of Him. In other words God’s purpose in creating sexuality in us is His own preservation through guaranteed continuity of human race. Therefore our interest in sexuality should be limited only to self-replication of human progeny or procreation. Beyond this unwritten but universal law of God we should not have any interest in sex. Misuse of sex for pleasure is transgression in religious terms.

According to Sikhism Spiritual reality is more important than sensually perceived empirical reality because the real human being is not the visible physical body but the spirit. Therefore for the humans the spirit must rise higher towards God to become one with Him and in the process lose all interest in sex other than its prescribed purpose. If this does not happen the humans get engrossed in the ephemeral worldly attractions (and sex is one of them) to get astray and waste this precious life. Just as rust grows from iron itself and destroys it, so does perverted sex grow from the uncontrolled desires of the humans and destroys them. The human

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533 Many people and some religions (ie Buddhism) do not accept that soul exists.
attractions are called *Ras* (रस). This word has no equivalent in English so I will call it “illusory flavour” or ‘intense emotion’. Among other illusory flavours the Sikh Gurus have identified five most powerful attractions. They are *Kam* (sex), *Karodh* (anger), *Lobh* (greed), *Moh* (attachment) and *Ahankar* (pride) in order of their potency. The first one of them is *Kam* (SEX or lust) with which we are concerned here. Guru Tegh Bahadur writes:

“Most humans live in lust; anger and greed, and forget the Lord. They consider the false body as real, which in fact is like a dream at night (GGS P.219)\(^{537}\)

Just as dreams are not real but appear to be so, our involvement in gratification of bodily ‘illusory flavours’ is not real. It is only a passing phase that distracts us from reality.

Uncontrolled gratification of sexual desires only leads us astray. Bhagat Kabir evocatively depicts the illusory nature of sexual gratification through a natural imagery. He quotes the example of an elephant. An elephant is a very sexy animal. The elephant catchers exploit this weakness. They make a female paper elephant near a big pit. The male elephant rushes to mate with the paper puppet and falls into the pit. He is then domesticated by hitting a big and sharp halter (called अंकक अंकक) over his head. The poor elephant works for his master as a slave all his life.

“Lured by the weakness of sexual gratification the elephant is entrapped. O crazy mind know that he suffers the pain of a halter on his head”. \(^{538}\)

Elsewhere Kabir writes, “Little caring for the burning power of a flame, the moth jumps into it, the fish through ignorance is hooked by the bait, whereas we having the discernment do not control our sensual desires complicated as they are with manifold dangers. Alas how inscrutable is the power of delusion (Slok 18)

When we are overpowered by the desire to fulfil sexual propensities, we lose our discriminative faculty, our spiritualism is skewed and lustful motivations over cloud our rational faculties.

\(^{536}\) कबह लबी लदी मई भुव लदी /// (पंज 9062) कबह लबी लदी लदी पलवी /// (पंज 9062)

\(^{537}\) “कम बुद्ध भोत कम्भ पूर्णी, प्रसन्न हुसिन तिश्वस्विती \|

\(^{538}\) कबह भुवारी कबह कम्भ रदै भर लनै लदी सिहे अंकक अंकक कोनी” /// (पंज 295)

\(^{539}\) कबह भुवारी कबह कम्भ रदै भर लनै लदी सिहे अंकक अंकक कोनी (पंज 295)
True love, fidelity, refined behaviour, and moral restraints fly away. The thirst for sex is never quenched. In fact with each gratification it increases manifold and causes further bondage. Too much involvement in sex is an anticlimax of spiritualism.

According to Sikhism homosexuality is an un-natural condemnable act because it does not serve the divine purpose of procreation. Sikhism preaches, "If you remain with one woman you are as good as a celibate". Therefore any sexual act of a Sikh beyond this ideal is un-Sikh like, undesirable and prohibited by the Guru. Uncontrolled sex, whether homosexual or heterosexual, is forbidden in Sikhism. Extramarital or premarital sex is likewise honey mixed with poison. About all types of sexual activity our Guru says, "For a momentary sexual pleasure he/she will suffer untold pain for a long time. Although these moments are glorious, they lead to long period of regret" (I need not mention AIDS).

You also ask me, “Has God outlined any punishments for gays and lesbians?”

As far as I believe, God is not a human being and has no penal code to punish human beings. The punishment for humans is self-inflicted when they transgress the laws of nature. If you eat an item, which is not digested by your body, you suffer. If you steal somebody’s property, your mind is polluted. If you involve in socially forbidden sex, you suffer from AIDS and social ostracism. God’s laws are inscrutable and we cannot always understand what punishment God gives for what offence or sin. In Punjabi there is a phrase, which sums it up succinctly. It reads “God’s punishment rod makes no noise when it strikes”.

539 Such is the moral depravity of intense sexual gratification that the Hindu God Brahma did not spare even his own daughter Sraswati. His incestuous act is mentioned in the Paurans. We also also find it mentioned in Sikh literature. Similarly we find in the Bible that Lot overpowered by intense sexual desire had sex with his two daughters.

540 "कृपा रचना लद्दी दी".

541 तिमाह अतो तनात विन्द सिंह हूय पुनियाली भारत अन्तरिन तिमाह बादल विद्वे बुदिदि बुदिदि बुदिदि (पुजा 80)

542 "उर्वेन लक्ष तरारी सिंह अभय राजी"
The question that our Guru raised was “How to be the ideal human being”? He answered it himself by saying, “To live within the universal law.” At another place he says, “Only those can claim to be humans who spend their lives within self-imposed restrictions.” Too much sex and for that matter homosexuality is an infringement of the divine principle (of procreation) and is practised only to derive pleasure, which is ephemeral. It is a worldly perversity, which soon tends to go down to animal level and in many cases ends up in bestial behaviour.

Q3. Are the Sikhs restricted from studying other religions?

Answer: Man has always been religious from the day he inhabited this planet. History of mankind is closely associated with history of religion. The social, economic, artistic, and political aspects of human life have been deeply affected by religion since time immemorial. Home industries, trade, and our fairs have had a religious origin or impact. In many cases even wars resulted from religion which gave rise to politics. Religious beliefs have a great lot to do with our work and trade. For example the Jains did not like farming because it involved killing insects. As a result Jains are mostly involved in trade all over the world. The division of the Hindu society into four classes resulted in different people doing different jobs and achieving expertise in different fields. Religion also directed the human effort into artistic and literary fields. Most of our old world literature is religious. Similarly most of the old drawings, paintings, and buildings depict religious motifs.

Politics is also related to religion. Kings and rulers always tried to preach their religions far and wide which led to wars and defence. The thinking of the priests moulded the policies of the kings. We know that Buddhism affected the politics of many countries in Asia.

Religions are different ways to the same reality. Just as not all doctors administer the same medicine to all patients, religions offer different sets of philosophy to different people. Understanding religions adds to our knowledge. For example we can understand Japanese better if we understand their religion and beliefs. In our present world we live cheek

543 “हिंदु मर्मान्तक वधीन” (समस्ती)
544 “पुरुष साहित्य वस्तु” (साम्पुट)
545 , “संसारी मन्दिर किसी बारे त अनुभव न हो जाय बैठना, उपदेश और संगीत के मुद कोई राजनीति नहीं है। (मेहर और) देश में देश के विविध क्षेत्रों में प्रवाख्य किया जाए。” (प्रेम और)
by jowl with people professing various other religions and the only way to understand them and reduce the prejudice is to study their religious backgrounds that shaped their thinking and behaviour. Such an attitude brings human beings closer to each other and leads to peaceful co-existence, which is one of the aims of Sikhism. The alternative to this is internecine conflict, which can destroy the human society.

Guru Nanak studied Buddhism, Jainism, Islam and Hinduism and almost all Sikh Gurus have quoted from these sources. No Guru has barred the Sikhs from studying other religions.546

Q4. Amrit means “no death” and yet Amrit dharis die. Why?

Answer: Before we discuss this issue we must know what death is. Physical death is cessation of activity. When the cells of our body disintegrate we die. This can happen due to disease, old age, poison, loss of blood or through any other such cause.547 Death is certain and cannot be conquered. No religious leader the world over has so far lived beyond the usual span of human existence. To say that Amrit or Abe-Hyat conquers death is a myth and so far no remedy for physical death has been discovered548. What would this world be like if nobody died?

In religious idiom the term death does not mean physical death. For example Guru Nanak says, “When I say my prayers I live, when I forget the Lord, I die”549. All religious leaders without an exception talk of dying and then becoming alive which does not mean dying a physical death and reappearing in a new physical body. It means dying to the attractions of the world and becoming alive in spirit. This is absolutely necessary in all religions.

Once a person dies this kind of death he attains ever-lasting life in the Almighty.550

546 पूरा मकड़ कहीं बिलकुल नहीं, दिया दे कथे दियही सियहूँ || सब दे गंभीर कथे दियहूँ, दियहूँ रोश दियहूँ दे गंभीर। (सुमता पूर्ण सूत्र 2 अध्याय 110 अवर 89)
547 सिखवाली दिखाई ? अक्षमण का सुपौरुष वाक्यदीव || पौरुष दिखाई ? दियही अक्षमण का कोटके जोत || (अतंक)
548 ने पूर्वी मे लगी मन्कुरंगत्र (पं. 222) सिंहद भवक कुनके कुललाभ हनुमान (पं. 726) सिंहद भवक अग्नीके दियही वसप वोल (पं. 820) सिंहद भवक गुलद कह कहे अव पर (पं. 422)
549 अवहा नीर सियही आत्म सम || (पं. 556) दी दियही उदर दी आत्म सम || (पं. 575), दिय आत्म दियही पैदे अव होर दियही (पं. 176)
550 लीड भवक अवहा हजरी सियही पूर काल ने देखी (पं. 1704) सिंहद आत्म आत्म हजरी के अवहार भव कहे (पं. 480) सिंहद अवहा हजरी पूर्ण हकक || (पं. 925)
According to the Guru such death comes only to those rare people who are absorbed in God, through the Guru’s ‘Word’ (Shabad). Spiritually, knowledge available to us in Gurbani is Amrit  and has the power to bring a worldly dead person to eternal spiritual life. The Amrit Sanchar organised by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 AD was an attempt to educe pledge from the novitiates to follow Gurbani. To get baptised and not to read, understand, and act upon Gurbani does not work miracles. Such a person is still dead after having been baptised. For the Sikhs Amrit is their Guru’s ‘Word’.

**Q5. Does Sikhism approve spiritual healing?**

Many people make claims that repeating certain hymns of Gurbani cured them from certain diseases. Some even suggest that certain Shabads, if repeated a certain number of times, cure certain diseases or fulfil desires. Some modern day Sants have even started hanging amulets containing Gurbani round people’ necks and claim that they have magical powers. However no Guru has mentioned any such thing in the Holy Scriptures. In fact the Gurus have forbidden such actions.

It should be noted that most of our diseases are either psychological or the result of some irregularities committed by ourselves. No disease is sent by God to chastise us. Here are some causes of the diseases:

551 gur prswdI jIvq mrY mir jIvY sbdu kmwie ] mukiq duAwrw soeI pwey ij ivchu Awpu gvwie ] (pMnw 1276)

552 AMimRq hir kw nwau sdw iDAwieAw (pMnw 517) bwxI gurU gurU hY bwxI ivic bwxI AMimRqu swr (pMnw 982) gur kw sbdu AMimRq hY ijq pIqy iqK jwie (pMnw 34) AMimRq eyko sbdu hY nwnk gurmuiK pwieAw (pMnw 644)

553 mnu bycY siqgur kY pwis ] iqsu syvk ky kwrj rwis (pMnw 286)

554 AauKD mMqR qMq siB Cwru krXYhwru ihrdy mih DwR (196-1) (Reject recitation of mantras and observance of rituals. Only let the Creator occupy the seat in your heart.)

555 Gurbani has identified three main types 1. Inherited diseases (AwiD) 2. Diseases of the body (ibAwiD) and 3. Diseases of the mind (aupwiD). The first two need physical treatment and the last one is psychological. Without love of God humans are puru jImJ (abode of devil): puru jImJ hI hI gurA wiD  (pMnw 9026)
Gurbani instructs us about food, dress, cleanliness, and above all about psychological self-examination (known as introspection). If we properly follow the Guru’s directions, we can be immune to all diseases and also cure most of those that have afflicted us already. Sincere prayer performed with deep devotion by a patient himself/herself works wonders. It aids determination, boosts will power and has a lot of salutary effect on the patient. Congregational prayers performed sincerely from the heart may offer some emotional relief to the patient although no empirical data is available. Magic potions, incantations, and soothsaying of outsiders have absolutely no effect on the sufferer.

Gurbani lends peace to mind, helps forget problems, develops fortitude, suggests ways of solving life problems and attaches us to truth. If we think ill of others or do some harm to somebody, it affects us psychologically and causes disease. Negative thinking and worries too cause many diseases. That is why the Guru instructs us to be always on the ascendant and never to think ill of others. If we overeat or do not care about hygiene, we fall ill.

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556 Gurbani (SGW 754)
557 Gurbani (SGW 387)
558 Templeton and Harvard scientists conducted research to find if prayers of relatives have any effect on the recovery of patients. This was the sixth such experiment. The experiments produced no empirical evidence to show the effect of prayers on the health of a patient. Prayers help only those who themselves sincerely pray from the heart. More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of but such prayers must be performed by the patient himself/herself. Congregational prayer can lend only sympathy. Sympathy does lend consolation to the sufferer but does not help in curing the disease.
559 Gurbani (SGW 1287)
560 Gurbani (SGW 825)
561 Gurbani (SGW 386)
Sometimes physical diseases are also caused by some mental or psychological factors. The Gurus do not offer any chemicals or incantations to cure diseases but attack such diseases through the mind. In this connection Bhai Nand Lal writes, “The perfect Guru treats the mind and thus psychologically fulfils the desires by removing the causes of the diseases.” Gurbani cures diseases when it is devotedly read, understood and followed in letter and spirit. Mere repetition like a mantra has no effect. Most people are not only diseased but also spiritually dead. What they need is not pharmaceutical treatment but psychological help, which the Guru provides through Gurbani. “The Guru has poured the Ambrosial Nectar of the Lord’s Name into my mouth, O my soul. Now my dead soul has come back to life.”

Some physical diseases are caused by some factors about which we humans have so far not been able to know and guard against. Guru Angad Dev suffered from a cyst on his foot. Guru Hargobind suffered from small pox in his childhood and Guru Harkrishan died from the same disease. In their days nothing much was known about these diseases and their causes. We should remember that Guru Har Rai ran a dispensary and doled out free medicines. If he could cure diseases through repeating certain Shabads (or through amulets), he would not spend money on medicines.

The Guru’s panacea for all diseases is Gurbani. The following prescription may help many people to avoid diseases or even cure them.

1. ਇਹੀ ਅਲਿਕਾ ਤੇਹਾ ਗੰਧਾ ਅਨੁ ਪਰਤੀ ਕਰਵਾ ਅਧਿਆਪਾ (ਪੰਜੋਕਸ਼ 84) Eat sparingly.
2. ਕਰਮ ਕ੍ਰੂ ਵਿਧਾਪਾ ਵਹੀ ਚਲਾਏ॥ ਨਿਖਰੋ ਕੇਤਲ ਸੇਹਾਪਾ ਚਲਾਈ (ਪੰਜੋਕਸ਼ 842)
   Anger and Over indulgence in sex spoil health.
3. ਜੁਦੀਐ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਵੇਸਿਣਾ ਕਸ਼ਟ ਦੀ ਰਸਮ ਅਧਿਆਪਾ॥ (ਪੰਜੋਕਸ਼ 844)
   Ego is a big disease.
4. ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਸੌਨਾ ਸੌਨਾ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ (ਪੰਜੋਕਸ਼ 948)
   A sinless body is truly healthy.
5. ਅਲੀਐ ਅਲੀਐ ਤਾਨਾ ਜਨਾਲੀਐ ਪੁਲ ਅਲੀਐ ਕੁਝੀਐ॥ (ਪੰਜੋਕਸ਼ 823)
The aim of education is to understand that no one is inferior.

6 लोग दिखें वे भी उनके हठ अन, विक गौरी (पंक ४२७)
Fowl talk sickens mind and body.

7 दै लघु लघु वेंट निच निच दै अनेक अन (पंक १४२)
Fear not and frighten no one.

8 ते तैमी मलाभ भिले मे तैमे डर्न भाटिक (पंक १३८)
Your company influences your health.

“The Guru’s true follower can save himself from discomforts.”

(AGGS P.864)

Q6. How does Sikhism react towards drinking, smoking and using drugs?

People have been using intoxicating drugs since time immemorial. It has no direct connection with God or spiritualism. In olden times there was no research on this topic to find out whether their use is good for health or harmful. Slowly and steadily the research developed and the facts about intoxication began to come to light.

Drinking in the East:

The first reference to drinking in India is found in the Vedas. The Rig Vedic Rishis (Religious mendicants) are said to have used Som Ras, which was a kind of intoxicating drug. Another less respectable kind of intoxication was Sura consumed by poor people. The elite of the times did not find liquors good for health. In Rig Veda therefore, drinking is condemned as harmful (Rig Veda Viii 2-12 and Vii 86-6) In the post Vedic period drinking became very common. Wine was drunk openly in Aspamedha rituals and even women consumed it (See ‘The East and the West’ by Vivekananda). So much so that even the very religious people began to drink. For example in Mahabharat (LVIII-5) we read that Krishna and Arjuna drank Madhvasava (a kind of wine).

The Yadva tribe of Lord Krishna became extinct because of drunkenness, which infested the whole tribe. In many areas the Brahmans and the priests preached its use and even associated it with spirituality. Hashish

566 चुंद ले मेल वधू चुंद न किनौंदे (पंक ७४५)
567 The great lawgiver Manu wrote, “Consuming alcohol is one of the causes of of the ruin of women” (Manu IX 80 and IX- 235).
began to be used on the pretext that Lord Shiva used it. It is still offered to Shiva and is commonly smoked at religious rituals in many Hindu temples. In the South of India people have been using Toddy (fermented sap of coconut) as wine.

Drinking is strictly forbidden in Islam but the Mughal rulers of India were greatly fond of drinking. Babar used to get drunk and fully inebriated used to say, “Babar enjoy this life, you will not get another.” Emperor Jehangir was the worst binge-drinker. In his autobiography, Tuzk-e-Jehangiri, he himself writes, “I have sold the kingdom of India to Noor Jehan for one cup of liquor and a portion of meat”. He also writes, “I used to drink nearly 20 pegs of the top intoxicating liquor. Soon my body developed reaction to it and I could not even hold the cup. Others used to put the cup to my lips.”

Drinking in the West

Drinking in the West has been common since time immemorial. The Romans were very fond of drinking. In some parts of the Bible (especially the Old Testament) we find drinking recommended for use by religious men. “God gave it to gladden the heart of man” (Psalm 104-115). “Wine cheers Gods and men.” (Judges 9-13). “Honour thy Lord and thy vats will be bursting with wine” (Deut 7-13). Jesus is said to have changed water into wine. Later, Paul advised Timothy to “Use a little of wine to keep the stomach in order” (Timothy 5-23). Wine is still consumed in the Churches during Lord’s Supper.

However, there are references in the Bible itself where drinking is condemned. “The drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty” (proverbs 21). In Ephesians (5-18) St. Paul says, “Do not get drunk with wine for that is debauchery”. In Ezekiel (44-21) priests are advised not to enter the inner court of the church after consuming wine.”

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568 महाराज ने श्रीमान विक्रम ने भाकर देवकर ने लिखा (तुजक-ए-जहांगीर)
569 महाराज ने श्रीमान ने लिखा गया “इस काल में मैंने इस धर्म के लिए महान काम किया है”. अध्यात्मक प्रभाव - एक काम जो द्वारा इस काम का प्रभाव बना है।

Sikh view:

As discussed above the two ancient religions of the world (Hinduism and Christianity) do not provide any clear-cut guideline on drinking.

Sikhism strictly forbids drinking. We find references to drinking, which are consistent. Nowhere does the Guru support drinking or permits any laxity in its use.

Guru Nanak addressed Bharthari thus “Make spiritual wisdom your molasses, and meditation your scented flowers; let good deeds be the herbs. Let devotional faith be the distilling fire, and your love the ceramic cup. Thus the sweet nectar of life is distilled. O Baba, the mind is intoxicated with the Naam, drinking in its Nectar. It remains absorbed in the Lord’s Love. Night and day, remaining attached to the Love of the Lord, the celestial music of the Shabad resounds.” (AGGS page 360)

“By drinking O Nanak, one takes on countless vices and corruption. So make spiritual wisdom your molasses, and the Praise of God your bread; let the Fear of God be the dish of meat. O Nanak, this is the true food; let the True Name be your only Support.” (AGGS page 553-554)

Sikh history tells us that Guru Angad Dev refused to meet Maluka unless he agreed to give up drinking.

In modern days the Sikhs have come to be known as the people who consume alcohol more than any other group. No wonder the chronic asthma and liver complaints are on the increase among the Sikhs. In India one of the main causes of divorce is binge drinking. Traffic accidents increase year after year due to drinking and so do the drug and drink related disabilities. Murders and suicides are mostly the result of drinking.

The Sikhs in Britain are being influenced by the Western culture and have joined the swelling ranks of drinkers ignoring the instructions of their
Gurus. Ironically some well-educated Sikhs organise drink and dinner parties on the occasion of Baisakhi when the use of alcohol was specifically forbidden to the Sikhs. They proudly publish their pictures of such parties in the world press. Many ultra modern Diaspora Sikhs have even started taking Guru Granth Sahib to the public bars at weddings. Little wonder they start offering drinks to Guru Granth Sahib and invent a libation ceremony.

Drinking has now become a fashion in the West in spite of the research proving it to be the cause of impairing a person’s efficiency. It dulls the brain and what is called relaxation is nothing but loss of self-control. A drunkard would do certain immoral acts that an ordinary sober man abhors. Guru Nanak mentioned this fact more than 500 years ago.

There are some who would accept that Guru Granth Sahib forbids drinking but argue that there is no mention in it of smoking and other hard drugs used today. Guru Granth Sahib preaches the attainment of Sehaj (moderation) and has outlined general guidelines. It forbids all intoxication of whatever kind. The modern drugs like LSD etc were not yet invented in the Guru period otherwise they would have found a mention in Gurbani. Smoking started only when Columbus discovered Tobacco plant in 1493 AD. Sir John Hawkins brought Tobacco plant to England in 1565. Later Sir Thomas Row took it from England to India and offered it to King Jehangir in 1615 AD but by then the volume of Guru Granth Sahib had been completed (1604 AD). There are references in Sikh history where the later Gurus prohibited its use. Guru Gobind Singh prohibited all intoxication. His injunctions apply to all intoxicants even those not yet invented.

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Q7. How many Gurus do the Sikhs believe in?

Over and above the ten Sikh Gurus some people identify other Sikh Gurus as well. Some non-Sikhs, out to downgrade Sikhism, also intentionally augment such attempts. Some sants have also started calling themselves Gurus. In the Holy Granth too we have Shabad Guru, Pawan Guru, Granth Guru, and Sikh Guru. In addition the phrase Guru Khalsa is also commonly used. A Muslim friend has raised this question. “How many Gurus do the Sikhs believe in?”

Eternal Guru (Shabad)

As discussed earlier there is only one Guru, the creator of the Universe. When the spirit of the Lord (His Word or Shabad) dawns upon somebody and the later attains divine enlightenment he becomes a part of God and assumes the title of a Guru. A Guru is a perfect human being who enshrines the Lord’s Word. It is the Lord’s Word (Shabad), which remains the real Guru and not the material body of the Guru’s person. The ten Gurus of the Sikhs were one in spirit (Word). They were like the ten lamps ignited by a single flame and thus preaching one and the same philosophy.

Granth Guru

A Guru is first Sikh then Guru. The difference disappears when both reach the same level of spirituality. We have examples of Guru Angad Dev and Guru Amar Das who were Sikh Gurus. The Guru has implanted the Word of His Shabad within me; I have attained the supreme status.

A perfect man is uniformly selfless, neither double-minded nor half-minded, intelligent, profoundly simple, devoid of covetousness, and also of lust for power and fame.” (The perennial philosophy Page55)
When a Guru spiritually installs his *shabad* in a Granth, the Granth becomes the Guru (guide) for posterity. In Sikhism the ten Sikh Gurus preached a set philosophy and were living Gurus. Later the last living Guru passed on the Guruship to the Holy Granth. The Guru still remains the ‘Word’ (*Shabad*) not the paper or the ink used in the Granth.

There is only one Guru and it is the “Word”.⁵⁸² Since the ‘Word’ is in the Granth Sahib, therefore the Sikhs call Granth Sahib as the spiritual and eternal Guru.

**Guru Khalsa**

When the *Shabad*, either through the living human Guru or the Granth Guru, establishes itself firmly in the hearts of human beings, then such human beings are collectively known as the Khalsa (Pure).⁵⁸³ Since they cannot always be individually equal to the Guru in spiritual knowledge, they are collectively known as the Khalsa Guru or Guru Panth. Their thinking and behaviour is based on the ‘Word’ (*Shabad*) of the Guru, which still remains the real Guru.

Here it should be noted that Guru Gobind Singh is commonly but mistakenly understood to have started the words “Khalsa” and ‘Panth’. As will be clear elsewhere in this book, the words ‘Khalsa’ and ‘Panth’ existed before Guru Gobind Singh and were extensively used.⁵⁸⁴

In Sri Guru Granth Sahib we find Bhat Kirat using this word as follows:

“iaeau amau मतिंग्ल जुज मंजिल विन मिलें जाम जुज भिटायी” (पंज १४०५)

The word ‘Panth’ existed even before Guru Nanak but was not ‘Khalsa’ in its character.

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⁵⁸² इकू बेंकू इकू बेंकू नवा इनेआ मंजिल जीकिंदर (पंज ७७७)
⁵⁸³ जुलामान सारामान जुजहुकू बेंकू (पंज १२४)।।
⁵⁸⁴ मंजिल इनेआ मंजिल जीकिंदर आमन्दल जुज निकल (पंज १ प्रथम ३) धर्मविह निकल मंजिल विनिर्दिष्ट जाम निकल जिकम जुजरिंम (पंज १ प्रथम ३)।। See also var 23/1, 30/1, 3/5 etc
Guru Nanak clarified the concept, the later Gurus developed it and the organisational work was left for Guru Gobind Singh. “By the time of Guru Gobind Singh a definite code of conduct had been given to the Sikhs, a definite philosophy preached among them, a definite language and script and a definite scripture had been given to them. All this separated the Sikh community from the rest of the population. What was now required was to give this community a definite organisation, which Guru Gobind Singh did.”585 As soon as the Sikhs imbibed the full spirit and meaning of ‘Khalsa’, Guru Gobind Singh formally named it ‘Khalsa Panth’. It is an organised group of God-loving, spiritually exalted intellectuals following the Guru in the letter and the spirit of the ‘Word’ (Shabad). Such a group was considered by the Guru to be capable of guiding the Sikh community through taking organisational and religious decisions on his behalf in the light of the Scriptures.586

Pawan Guru

This concept is taken from a hymn, which concludes the Sikh Morning Prayer. It reads, “Air is the Guru and water is the father the earth acts as mother…” (Japu)

All life, wherever it exists depends on water. The earth we live on is nearly eighty three percent water. It is not an exaggeration to say that if there is no water there will be no life.587 Our blood is nearly 55% water by volume and the soft tissue is also composed of nearly 80% water. Since life came out of water the Guru calls it father.588 The Hindus address water as Indra (see Rig Veda vi 24.7).

Although water is necessary to create life, it is itself composed of two parts of hydrogen and one part of Oxygen, which form a significantly large part of air (पानी). In other words it can be said that no life can exist without air (पानी) to which water owes its existence.

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585 Advanced history of the Punjab by G.S.Kholsa page 283
586 अधीन पंच कतरा पोत्तर भरने में हूँ बुझ भरने रोंजित निर्देशकों का उद्योग निर्देशकों का उद्योग (मैं वकल तो पत्र) उधुपी मरी हुला सहर गुजरी भरने अधीन हूँ बुझ गुजरी। (भयो में वह है मध्य श्रेय वही भरने जिसमें माम (अर्द्री मान दरी हूँ बुझ मान ५०६)। अधीन भरने पटु मामे अधीन मान तो समुद्र आने मामे (भरो पुरुष)
587 धिमल पहाड़ी निहीं है निहीं धिमल मानी सुप होंगे (पटर ६२२) तलब धिमल सुप मानी सुप है माम वह है माम होंगे होंगे होंगे। (पटर ५२२) पहाड़ी दिनत सुप का दिनत हो दिनत हो दिनत (प.4240)
588 पानी हूँ पहाड़ी दिनत (मामी),
It is a Divine breath infused in us and helps us in acquiring enlightenment (Word). It is for this reason that air is usually called ‘the breath of spiritual life’ When air is not available for breathing all acquired knowledge is lost. When life without air cannot be imagined. Living cells require oxygen or other constituents of air to start process of division and thus release energy to shape the body. Therefore air is the Guru in the sense that it is the cause behind the functioning of the intellectual faculties just as a Guru is the cause behind our enlightenment. The body may have all the water it requires, but if there is no air, our faculties pack up. When the material world is described as a reflection of the Almighty, it is only then that the “air” is called Guru. Bhai Gurdas translates “Pawan” as the Guru’s word (Shabad).

In the above-mentioned hymn the earth is personified as Dharat Mahat (Great mother) and day and night are described as nurses. The day looks after diurnal activities like photosynthesis in plants etc and the night nurtures nocturnal life in animals providing restful sleep. They are, as it were nurturing life in the lap of mother earth. The whole hymn is an allegory, which should not be taken as a material or literal fact because night and day cannot be our physical nurses in the literal sense.

Q8. Can we say that Guru is God?

Followers of some religions claim that their religious leaders were God in human form. The Hindus believe that Ram Chandra was God and later God once again appeared as Krishna. Moses is said to have communicated with God through a burning bush. Some Christians believe that Jesus was God but others call him Son of God. Later Muhammad challenged the concept of “Son of God” when he wrote, “How could God have a son when he had no consort”? (Quran VII 6.102). As and when righteousness suffers, I take birth as an incarnation to establish justice and fairness. It is ironic that according to Skand Puran Lord Krishna was killed in Gir forest by a hunter named Jar with an arrow. His dead body lay there unattended until only bones remained. In 1076 AD Raja Anant Varma erected a temple in memory of Krishna at Jagannath Puri (Orrisa-India). This temple came to be known as Jagan Nath (protector of the world) and is now visited by millions of Hindus every year. There used to be a tradition that anybody who fell under the chariot carrying
Although Guru Nanak boldly denied being a prophet, many Sikhs who think that God himself was born as Nanak. Ironically in the same breath they also repeat the following lines (supposedly) written by Guru Gobind Singh, “All those who call me God will fall into the pit of hell.” This idea of a human God contradicts the philosophy of Guru Nanak according to whom God is ‘unborn’ and without parents.

Obviously, if Guru Nanak was God then the Sikhs must also admit that God is not अजुनी and स्वभाम. Again Since our four Gurus Guru Nanak (1469-153), Guru Angad (1504-1552), Guru Amar Das (1470-1574) and Guru Ram Das (1519-1581) were contemporary and lived at the same time, we will have to admit that at one time there were four Gods.

This impression (calling Guru Nanak God) appears to have resulted from faulty interpretation of Gurbani. There are some Shabads, which have been interpreted to mean that Guru is literally God. Before we take up some of those Shabads let us consider some attributes of God as stated by our Gurus.

the statue of Krishna and gave up his ghost would go to heaven. Millions went to heaven like this until the British Government of India stopped this practice.

Matthew 3:17 John 1-14 Mark 14-61 Luke 1-32 Here and there Christ is also called God .See John 5-17

J.S. Grewal and Irfan Habib in their “Sikh History from Persian Sources” (page 66) quote Dabistan- e-Mazahib in which Mobad writes, “I did not see any Sikh who does not consider Baba Nanak to be God”.

If Guru Nanak was God what need was there for him to visit Sach Khand and receive nO inD nwm ? Who did he receive it from? Was there another superior God?

I heard a Sikh in a local Gurdwara in Nottingham announcing that Sikhs have ten Gods. I wonder if the announcer had read “All those who call me God will fall into the pit of hell.” This idea of a human God contradicts the philosophy of Guru Nanak according to whom God is ‘unborn’ and without parents.
(He is within us and without us and is limitless. God resides in everything)

2. अनन्त विस्मयव निहित हैं हमें (पंक्ति 284)
(Uncountable expansions resulted out of Him)

3. तुम हमे केवल हमने हमारे दृष्टिक नहीं (एच.एच. 13)
(You have innumerable eyes and yet no physical eye)

4. उसके अलग मुक्तच तुम्हारे सुधार सब पूरे करनेवाल (एच.एच. 350)
(He existed before time began and He existed when the creation started. He is perfect)

5. आप त यही पूर्ण विद्वान (पंक्ति 928)
(My compassionate Lord is neither born nor does He die)

Obviously the above statements cannot be applied to Guru Nanak or any other human being. We celebrate the Guru’s birthdays year after year and know that he did not have more than two physical eyes and was not unborn (अजुनी) and immortal (अमृत). The Guru himself says that he is human. वह विद्वान नहीं हैं वहीं (पंक्ति 351) We also know from Gurbani that God is invisible (अविद्वान) but this cannot be said of our Gurus. When Guru Nanak says, “तिरिक्षिता यह तिरिक्षितान तिरिक्षिता तु महादेव” (एच.एच. 442) we cannot reasonably argue that he was praising himself and inflating his ego uttering the above lines.

Now consider the following lines:

1. “You are the Great Primal Being, the most Inaccessible and Unfathomable Lord God; I search for You, but cannot find Your depth. You are the farthest of the far, beyond the beyond, O my Lord and Master; You alone know Yourself, O Lord of the Universe.”

598 आप त यही पूर्ण विद्वान (पंक्ति 284)
599 आप त यही पूर्ण विद्वान (पंक्ति 928)
2. “You are my Father, and You are my Mother. You are my Soul, my Breath of Life, and the Giver of Peace. You are my Lord and Master; I am Your slave. Without You, I have no one at all. Please bless me with Your Mercy, God, and give me this gift, that I may sing Your Praises, day and night.”

3. Having attacked Khuraasaan, he terrified Hindustan. The Creator Himself does not take the blame, but has sent the Mughul as the messenger of death. There was so much slaughter that the people screamed. Didn’t You feel compassion, Lord?

4. “The Saviour has saved the child, and cured his fever. I have been saved, in the True Guru’s Sanctuary; service to Him does not go in vain”.

5. “The Lord saved me from Sulhi Khan. The Emperor did not succeed in his plot, and he died in disgrace.”

Can God utter the above lines unless we believe that God was referring to another superior God?

The idea seems to have originated from certain mystic expressions, which have been interpreted out of context to mean that the Guru was God. Some of these lines are listed below with translation.

1. “The Lord Himself wielded His Power and expanded throughout the universe. The Formless Lord took form (became Sargun), and with His Light He illuminated the whole universe. He is All-pervading. The Lamp of the Shabad (the Word) has been lit.” (AGGS P.1395)

This refers to the year 1519AD when Panjab was ruled by Daulat Khan’s sons Ghazi Khan and Dilawar Khan who were attacked by Babar, the Emperor of Afghanistan. The inhabitants of Syedpur resisted resulting in terrible fiendish slaughter and carnage. Their wives and children were carried away in captivity and their houses demolished.
“The embodiment of light, the Lord manifested Himself through Nanak. He gave place to Guru Angad; His essence was absorbed into Angad’s essence. Guru Angad showed His mercy and established Amar Das as the True Guru.” (AGGS page 1408) 605

2. “O Mathra, say this without hesitation that there is no difference between God and Guru; Guru Arjun is the visible Personification of the Lord Himself. (God is reflected in Guru Arjan’s words and deeds.” (AGGS P.1409) 606 We should also note that some words change their meanings in different contexts. For example the word प्रमुख (pramukh) does not always mean ‘God’. In our ordinary conversation, the Sikh ladies call their husband प्रमुख (pramukh), 607 which simply means that they offer him the top-most respect. We also say दिस निध देहि गुप्त मंगल पूजनी प्रमुख. It is used in the same sense in Gurbani and Janam Sakhi. For example God is recorded as having addressed Guru Nanak as “Parmesar” (God). 608 Obviously there could not be two Parmesars at the same time. Similar verses of being one with God can be found in the writings of many other spiritual writers. For example Kabir says, “God and Kabir are one and the same thing. No one can find any difference between them.” 609 It is in this sense that we find our Gurus mentioned as highly virtuous human beings (embodiments of God). God invested Guru Nanak with mystical light of the “Word” (Shabad) and thus made him His mouthpiece. 610

605 जोड़ देही दीप अरुण कृष्ण हरण विद्याधर मृदुल दिमुल । गुरु अंगद ने हरण निध दीप मृदुल दिमुल । अंगद ने अंगद कृष्ण हरण निध दीप मृदुल दिमुल । अंगद का हरण निध दीप मृदुल दिमुल । प्रमुख ने हरण निध दीप मृदुल दिमुल ।

606 गुरु अर्जुन ने दिब वेद दीप ज्ञान अरुण दिमुल दीप (दिहन 1409)। गुरु अर्जुन अन्य हृदय की विषय में अवलोकित।

607 यह तरह की बातं कहने वाली प्रमुख के लिए उपयुक्त है। 

608 कभी कभी दिहि उपागुप्त गुरु प्रमुख (गुरु कुंडली)। प्रमुख के लिए उपयुक्त है।

609 “रूप और कबीर है, कबीर और रूप है। किसी को भी नहीं मिलता।” ।

610 जोड़ देही दीप अरुण कृष्ण हरण विद्याधर मृदुल दिमुल (गुरु कुंडली)। गुरु अर्जुन के लिए उपयुक्त है।
Later the same mystical subtlety of the ‘Word’ (Shabad) was passed on to Guru Angad, who became similarly enlightened.

It must however be kept in mind that although the Guru is not incarnated God his status among humans is spiritually the highest nearing to God. Bhai Gurdas states, “ਇੱਕ ਬਵਾਬਤ ਅਕਾਲ ਸੁੱਭ ਫ਼ੁੱਲ ਦੁਇਸ਼ੀ ਸੰਦਰਭਾਂ” (ਇੱਕ 1/35). A Sikh offers the same respect and devotion to his Gurus as he would offer to God without putting the Guru on God’s throne. The Guru is to God as a wave is to the ocean. The wave is different but still a part of the same ocean having all the qualities of the oceanic water. This indicates that it is not sufficient to have a Guru but that the Guru must be like God capable of passing his celestial knowledge to his followers through the ‘Word’ (Shabad).

Guru Nanak himself says, “I was a minstrel out of work when the Lord took me into His service. To sing His Praises day and night, He gave me His Order, right from the start. My Lord and Master summoned me, His minstrel, to the True Mansion of His Presence. He dressed me in the robes of His True Praise and Glory. The Ambrosial Nectar of the True Name became my food. Those who follow the Guru’s Teachings are satisfied and find peace. His minstrel spreads His Glory, singing and vibrating His ‘Word’. O Nanak, praising the True Lord, I have obtained Him.” (AGGS P.150)

Except the zealots among the Sikhs, no man else believes that Baba Nanak was God.

“There are some who have tried to impose upon the ignorant by asserting that Nanak was an incarnation of the deity and that he worked miracles...the same assertions are made in favour of every person who is
renowned for sanctity or virtue.” (R.N.Cust - The life of Baba Nanak)

Q9. Is Gurbani the direct ‘Word’ of God?

As stated earlier the real Guru is the Shabad (Word) and not the mortal frame of a human being. Most Sikhs believe that Gurbani is the revealed word of God, a spiritual representation of God’s intentions. However there are some who believe that God sent the exact linguistic units and the Sikh Gurus simply acted as clerks to record them. The idea may have been borrowed from Islam where every dot and dash of the Quran is usually believed to have been dictated to Muhammad by God through angel Gabriel. 615

Intellectuals are of the view that the enlightened intellect of the Gurus imbibe the spirit of the Lord’s commands and translated them for their followers.616 In other words what the Guru received were the mystical ‘ideas’ or ‘concepts’ and not the exact verses or words. At one stage or the other (for example in writing the Hymns) the human agency was involved. It is because of this that earlier copies of the Sikh Holy Granth contain texts, which have been written and then defaced.617 Also there are some hymns, which are recorded at more than one place. Here and there even the sequence of verses is different from the present volume. We cannot assume that God is fallible. Again the following points need to be understood.

1. If God wrote all this poetry then the names of the Bhagats and the Gurus should not have appeared in the Granth as writers of these hymns. How could Guru Nanak say, “Servant Nanak chants the Glorious Words of the Guru’s Bani; through them, one is absorbed into the Naam, the Name of the Lord.” (AGGS P. 494)618

615 It is commonly believed that revelation comes in ideas and concepts embodying Truth. It does not come in linguistic units.
616 “ब्रजी द्वारा जाप कर गुड़वाली ब्रजातिरिक अंदाम” (ब्रजी नूरग्राम 4.29)
617 मात्र वहाँ ती का स्थान “वे रेकेता” (अम) विश्व वे वर्तक विश्व भौंत वर्ते का विश्व स्थान विश्व वे वर्तक विश्व स्थान वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि वर्तक इत्यादि
618 ज्ञान हनूमन वे वे अन्ये ब्रजी नूरग्राम 4.29
2. Baba Farid says “Farid, those who did not enjoy their Spouse when their hair was black — hardly any of them enjoy Him when their hair turns grey.” AGGS p.1378) 619 but Guru Amar Das contradicted it by saying, “Farid, whether one’s hair is black or grey, our Lord and Master is always here if one remembers Him.” (AGGS P.1378) 620 We cannot say that God made a mistake and then after 300 years corrected the mistake. 621

3. “ਤੂ ਜਨਮਕੁਰਾਮ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਨਾ ਅਭੇਡੀ” Who was God calling Parbraham Parmesar? Was there another God beside Him?

4. Gurbani clearly says, “ਖਿਲਾਂਦ ਵਧਾ ਸਨੈ ਕੁਖ ਅਭੇਡੀ” Are we wiser than Guru Arjan Dev and contradict him by saying that it was uttered by God (ਇਹ ਦੀ ਕਥਾ) and not uttered by Satta and Balwand? Here mark the word ਅਭੇਡੀ (composed or uttered).

5. All hymns are identified by the names of their writers. Their styles and dictions are easily recognisable. Guru Arjan Dev has clearly distinguished them by writing Mohalla or names of the writers with the hymns. Why would Guru Arjan Dev pass God’s writing under the names of the Gurus and Bhagats?

6. If God sent all the verses of the Granth Sahib (ਪੁੱਤਰ ਦੀ ਕਥਾ), how do we interpret the following and what was the purpose of God in sending this hymn to us?

   (i) The poison had absolutely no harmful effect, but the wicked Brahmin died in pain.

   (AGGS p, 1137) 622
(ii) The Lord saved me from Sulhi Khan. The Emperor did not succeed in his plot, and he died in disgrace. The Lord and Master raised His axe, and chopped off his head; in an instant, he was reduced to dust. Plotting and planning evil, he was destroyed. The One who created him, gave him a push. Of his sons, friends and wealth, nothing remains; he departed, leaving behind all his brothers and relatives. (AGGS p.825)

(iii) “Such devastation has occurred. Didn’t you feel pain? Who was saying this to whom?

The misunderstanding appears to have gained ground through misinterpretation of certain hymns. Here are some, which are commonly quoted.

1. jYsI mY AwvY Ksm kI bwxI qYsVw krI igAwn vy lwlo (m:1 pMnw 722)
Here the word AwvY is translated as coming from God. In fact it is used in the same sense as we say, “mYnUM gwauxw nhIN AwauNdw”(I do not know how to sing). The correct translation of the verse therefore is, “O Lalo I can pass only as much knowledge of God’s commands as I understand.” The whole hymn is translated hereunder:

“As I understand the message, so do I interpret it, O Lalo. Bringing the marriage party of sin, Babar has invaded from Kabul, demanding our land as his wedding gift, O Lalo. Modesty and righteousness both have vanished, and falsehood struts around like an autocrat, O Lalo. The Qazis and the Brahmins have abandoned their roles, and Satan now conducts the marriage rites, O Lalo. The Muslim women read the Koran, and in their misery, they call upon God, O Lalo. The Hindu women of high social status, and others of lowly status as well, are included in the same category, O Lalo. (AGGS Page722)

If we believe that God dictates the Gurbani then God himself is to blame for Babar’s invasion and has no right to complain. Is God powerless before people like Babar?

2. मलिनकित्व वी चक्रे मंडि मंडि विवि नाउमिकित्व यथि विवि अवि अवि भवि भवि भवि

623 सलही से सलही सलही सलही द भवि भवि सलही सलахी सलahkan
O Sikhs accept the Guru’s word as “perfect truth” because the Guru is divinely prompted by God to utter it.

3. The servant of thy servants Nanak says only what You inspire him to say.

4. On my own I have no power to even move my tongue (preach). I am simply conveying God’s Hukam to the humanity. God blessed Nanak with the treasure of his Bhakti and Nanak’s enlightened house is spreading it everywhere.

5. I started expressing your commands only when You prompted me to express them.

6. Another half sentence is quoted by some people to prove that Gurbani came from God. This line reads, “Blessed, blessed the Creator, the primal being, our Lord and master. He himself sits and dispenses true justice. One who slanders the perfect Guru is punished and destroyed by the True Lord. This word (justice or pronouncement) is fixed by the Lord who created the Universe.” (AGGS page 306)

7. These lines have nothing to do with the origin of Gurbani. They are about God and His justice. We give below the English translation of this whole hymn.

"Blessed, blessed the Creator, the primal being, our Lord and master. He himself sits and dispenses true justice. One who slanders the perfect Guru is punished and destroyed by the True Lord. This word (justice or pronouncement) is fixed by the Lord who created the Universe.” (AGGS page 306)
This hymn is most often quoted to prove that Gurbani came direct from God. Here the word “पुढ” Needs to be understood. When we talk about something coming to us (as from old) we do not use the word “पुढ” but “पुढ” or “पुढ$. On the other hand when we talk of something going away then we say “पुढ ली/ण” or “पुढ ली/ण” For example अमी जर रद्दि में आई वर्तमान वर्ष ली रही थी जिनमें विविध वर्ष रह साध किया रहने था. पुढ ली refers to future not past.

The exact translation of the hymn should be, “All worries are now gone because Bani has been received which will guide us to the end of our mortal lives.” (In other words ‘Bani’ is eternal). We print here our own translation:

The Lord God has given us a prop (Gurbani). The house of pain and disease has been demolished by Gurbani. Let men and women celebrate. The Lord God, Har, Har, has blessed us with His Mercy. O pious people, there is now peace and comfort everywhere because people have come to believe that The Supreme Lord is pervading everywhere. All worries and anxieties have now vanished because Gurbani has been received to guide us for all times. The Lord has been compassionate. Nanak’s house has been preaching the True gospel. (AGGS page 628)

7. जळत्य बैले दृष्टिक देशलिखित (म:पं ११२८)
Nanak preaches only because he is exhorted by the Lord to preach.

8. बैले मानवि ले बैले समू बैले मुख बैले (म:पं १६२५)
The slave speaks as it pleases the Lord and utters mystical spiritual ‘Word’.

9. सैम बूढ दृष्टिकितम में बैलि बूढ़ि (म:पं २६४)
I have expressed only the concepts as received by me from my Guru.

As You inspire me to preach, so do I preach, O Lord Master. What other power do I have? O Nanak, sing His Praises in the holy congregation because the company of the holy is very dear to God. (AGGS page 508)

Clarifying the issue further the Guru himself says, “The divine ‘Word’ manifests itself in ambrosial Bani and the Guru orientated people present it to others for hearing.

The Guru’s instruction is the reflection of Primal Truth. We should try to live by it.

"He did not claim for his writings, replete as they were with wisdom and devotion, the merit of a direct transcription of the words of God; nor did he say that his own preaching required or would be sanctioned by miracles." J.D.Cunningham (A history of the Sikhs)

Q10. In spite of so many available Rehat Namas written by prominent Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh, why did SGPC produce yet another Rehat Maryada?

Rehat means a way of life or code of conduct. The moral and spiritual code for the Sikhs had been devised and fully explained in the Guru Granth Sahib. What the Sikhs had not yet acquired fully was an organisational code of conduct, which becomes a necessity when more and more people join in. Guru Gobind Singh issued oral instructions to the Khalsa from time to time to promulgate it. These were later reduced to writing by the followers of the Guru and came to be known as Rehat Namas. The most important of these Rehat Namas are those of Bhai Dya Singh, Bhai Chaupa Singh and Bhai Nand Lal who were all Guru Gobind Singh’s contemporaries.

Since organisation depends on circumstances and situations, which keep changing, Guru Gobind Singh did not feel the necessity to codify the
organisational code forever. However his methodology and the thinking behind that methodology have reached us from various sources some of them authentic and the others not so authentic.

After the liberation of Gurdwaras from the corrupt Mahants in the 20th century, it was felt necessary to keep the Sikhs united for other such eventualities and to bring about uniformity in their social functions and temporal observances. A committee was set up which examined all available sources (37-40 Rehat Namas) and found that most of the available material had been corrupted during the period of the eighteenth century when the Sikhs were hunted and hounded by the Mughal Government. The SGPC accepted only those rites and rituals, which matched with the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib and were also recorded in a majority of the available source material. In 1936 AD they produced the Rehat Maryada, which all Sikhs are supposed to follow today. The Rehat Maryada itself states, “The Rehat Maryada is an attempt by a dedicated group of renowned Sikh scholars to summarise the main teachings of the Gurus and outline the Sikh way of life in consultation with Rehat Namas of the ancient Sikhs and scholars of the Guru period.”

A close study of the available Rehat Namas reveals caveats in them. 627 Here are some of them. (1) They contradict each other and sometimes contradict themselves (2) There is no evidence that they were actually written by the people under whose names they appear. (3) One and the same person has written more than one Rehat Nama.

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627 Shamshwer Singh Ashok (P.60), Dr. Trilochan Singh and Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha (Gurmat Sudhakar p.251 and 261) consider most of the available Rehat Namas as fake. Some copying from one to the other is very obvious and many of them have been written by non-Sikhs. For example Nand Lal’s Rehat Nama is believed to have been written by Pindi Lal’s brother. There are incompatibilities with time line. Words like अप्सर and cwh used in Rehat Namas indicate their writing to be of the later 18th or early nineteenth century.
For example Bhai Nand Lal is accredited with three (Rehat Nama, Tankhah Nama and Sakhi Rehat) (4) Their language is not that of Guru Gobind Singh’s period. (5) More than one edition of one and the same Rehat Nama are available with different subject matter. (6) If a Rehat Nama were necessary the Guru would have produced one himself or at least authenticated one written by one of his devoted followers. 628

It is a general opinion that although the prominent Sikhs may have written some Rehat Namas, they have been deliberately corrupted at some time. Some of them are definitely written by non-Sikhs and registered under the names of the Guru’s near associates to give them an air of credibility.

Bhai Nand Lal, Bhai Prahlad Singh, Bhai Dya Singh, Bhai Chaupa Singh, Bhai Kesar Singh Chhiber, Bhai Desa Singh and Bhai Sahib Singh are supposed to have written some of the available Rehat Namas. Titles also include Mukat Nama, Wajab-ul-Arz and Rehat Nama Akal Purkh Ji Ka (issued in 1856 by Nirankari Darbara Singh). Space does not permit us to examine all of them here but we will briefly discuss a few.

1. Rehat Nama Bhai Nand Lal

(i) This Rehat Nama talks of “Sharadh” (A Hindu ritual-feast), which is criticised in the Holy Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru says, “He does not honour his ancestors while they are alive, but he holds ritual feasts in their honour after they have died. Tell me, how can his poor ancestors receive what the crows and the dogs have eaten up?” 629

Against this Rehat Nama, Bhai Dya Singh writes “One should not observe Sharadh by wearing Janeu (sacred Hindu thread). Instead one should stick to the Guru’s instruction and observe prayers to God”. 630

(ii) Again this Rehat Nama says that women are not trustworthy and should not be permitted to sing hymns. 631 The Guru says, “Why call women inferior when they give birth to great men”.

628 No Rehat Nama is recorded in the Dasam Granth.

629 “Aqy jy SrwD Awvn qW C`qI pRkwr dw pRswdu krY (nMd lwl)

630 jnyaU pwieky ivvwh SRwD ipMf Awidk n kry 

631 iqRIAw rwg suxy icq lwey, suxo lwl so  jmpur jwie (qnKwh nwmw B: nMd lwl)
The Rehat Nama itself tells us that it was written in Maghar Samat vadi 9 Samat 1752 (1695 AD). It also states that Guru Granth Sahib was given the status of a Guru. This is incompatible with the timeline. The Guruship was bestowed on Guru Granth Sahib in October 1708 (13 years after the writing of this Rehat Nama).

2. Rehat Nama Bhai Prahal Singh

(i) The writer himself proudly declares that he is Hans Raj Brahman. Such statement of caste pride cannot be accepted from a baptised Sikh who had stayed all his life with the Guru. Even otherwise Brahmans are discredited in the Guru Granth Sahib and Guru Gobind Singh himself said, “If they (the Sikhs) adopt the Brahman’s ways I will not trust them.”

(ii) The writer claims that Guru Gobind Singh himself told the writer to prepare a Rehat Nama but later admits that he was prompted by some Gurmukh Singh to prepare the document. This Rehat Nama claims that it records the direct words of Guru Gobind Singh.

(iii) This Rehat Nama records the date of its writing as 1695 AD and mentions that it was written in Abchal Nagar Nander. At that time (1695 AD) Nander was not called Abchal Nagar and also in 1695 AD the Guru was still in Anand Pur. This name became current only after Guru Gobind Singh’s death (1708 AD). Again since Amrit Sanchar happened in 1699 AD, how could a Rehat Nama appear four years earlier?
3. **Rehat Nama Bhai Dya Singh**

(i) Bhai Daya Singh was one of the five *Pyaras* and yet he writes that Guru Gobind Singh worshipped the goddess. Guru Granth Sahib says, “Why worship gods and goddesses, O Siblings of Destiny? What can we ask of them? What can they give us? The stone gods are washed with water, O Siblings of Destiny, but they just sink in the water.” *This Rehat Nama* also supports the wearing of a *Janeu*, which Guru Nanak had rejected at a very early age.

(ii) Dya Singh mentions Abchal Nagar in his *Rehat Nama*. Dya Singh died in 1708 AD but by then Abchal Nangar Nander had not come to be known by its present name Abchal Nagar (which began much after Guru Gobind Singh’s death). Obviously somebody else must have written this *Rehat Nama* after Dya Singh’s death. Dya Singh was one of the five beloved ones. He could not have made this mistake.

(iii) This *Rehat Nama* states, “One should learn Panjabi and recite Gurbani and never learn Arabic and Persian. Being a Singh, he is forbidden from learning *Sastri*”. It is hard to believe that Dya Singh did not know about Guru Nanak’s and Guru Gobind Singh’s writings in Persian and had no knowledge of Guru Arjan Dev’s hymns in Sahkriti.

(iv) Bhai Dya Singh died in 1708 AD but his *Rehat Nama* also records some later day incidents that happened after his death.

4. **Rehat Nama Bhai Desa Singh**

This *Rehat Nama* appears to have been written towards the end of 18th century. It recommends the use of opium and liquor. Other *Rehat Namas* forbid the use of all intoxicants.

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640 “सम लेनी पर्वत करी अख्त भंग भंजि सरदयन पुड़े उद गह सह शेलन आपें।केम घंजी ती गेह श्मादी वाण तदभरन ती रहें।”

641 “लेनी धार पुरजी नरी निमान आखुदी निमान अंश।उपहर तीनी नामनाही नरी स्म भोग घुङची आंडी (रैले 642)

642 “भविष्य दिगम्बर भंजि वर्तिये, मन्त्र राम राम भविष्य आखुदेल तांबी”

643 “अखुदी दाखली र धईं, सिद्ध दें वह कर साम्पतें हा हथूँ श्वेतिम काम्पींः व अभस्म वें उत्तर वें दर्षि। इसी में हुँ जी वाटी वें दर्षेंगी । “सम भोग तथे जाँधी जानिनी भाँड़ूँ, ता में उदम ता वाण लिखा” (रैले 79)

644 Some historians believe that Desa Singh was the youngest of the 10 sons of Bhai Mani Singh.

645 “उद्धी अभिंश से अभाज जंग, दिलहरे भांड़े भांड़ी तिलकः” (84). वह भी वहे ते भाजम संवेदः भाजम दिगम्बर रूढ़ि राम ता शेन्दे (484)
5. Rehat Nama Bhai Sahib Singh

Researchers tell us that Bhai Sahib Singh wrote Sau Sakhi in 1791 AD. It contains the two Rehat Namas known as ‘Rehat Nama’ and Mukatnama. Bhai Sahib Singh forbids the study of Arabic and Persian languages and tells the Sikhs not to serve under anybody. The writer appears to be ignorant of the fact that Guru Nanak wrote some hymns in Persian and Guru Gobind Singh wrote the whole of his Zafar Nama in Persian. The Guru’s court poet the Great Sikh scholar Bhai Nand Lal wrote most of his books in Persian.


Bhai Chaupa Singh was the nurse of Guru Gobind Singh. Strangely his Rehat Nama states, “If a Sikh is employed by the Muslim Government he is free from all restrictions of the Sikh Rehat.

It is clear from the language and the contents of these Rehat Namas that they have been written by some non-Sikhs after the death of Banda Singh when the Sikhs reverted to the jungles and there was nobody to check their authenticity or challenge it. Here and there some writings are directly associated with Guru Gobind Singh. Dasam Granth, Sarab Loh and Prem Sumarg are three such writings. The nineteenth century writers like Bhai Santokh Singh, Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Rattan Singh Bhangu accepted most of these fake writings as authentic without detecting the interpolations and made use of them in their writings causing more problems. Some Rehat Namas even talk of Sikh Raj.

For a Sikh the Guru’s word recorded in the Holy Granth Sahib is more important than any thing said or written by anybody else even if that somebody was a member of the Guru’s own family (Prithi Chand, Dhir Mal and Ram Rai etc). The available Rehat Namas are not credible.

11. The Sikhs recite a Shabad which means that “God fulfils all the desires we ask for” How can this be true?

There are indeed many Shabads, which say more or less the same thing. Obviously God does not grant everything we ask for. If that were so nobody would work and nobody would be poor. When verses are taken

646. “अत्रात दयामि अत्यं तर्वदृष्टि, तिने तिने दरियं र वशवं ि। (९०)
647. से सबक अथवा सरकार ने सबक अथवा उद्योग,शहीद हुई भूवु,हुरु दे नियात दे रिकॉर्ड दे रिकॉर्ड दे सबक ग्राहक ने ग्राहक ने (सस्क नियात दे नियात ५०वीं धूंती)
out of context the beauty of the hymns is lost and we deduce wrong conclusions.

Let us first of all try to understand what is meant in religious terminology for begging (मंगाना), beseeching or asking for. There are only two things humans can ask for or beg. They can either ask for worldly comforts or they can ask for spiritual enlightenment. God is our father. Like our worldly father He is very kind and provides us with everything we need. However, like our worldly father, there are certain things He would decline to provide us. For example a child may love to catch a burning coal, which he likes, but a worldly father will not let him do so. Again, a young son may ask to be permitted to use drugs but his father will not permit because he knows that drugs can be harmful for his child. The father may decline to give even simple everyday things to an idle and never-do-well son because he does not work for them and therefore does not deserve them. In other words we can say that the father provides everything but the children have to deserve and expect to get only those things, which are not harmful for them. Those who ask for worldly comforts and deserve them, they certainly get them from God.

Gurbani is a guide for spiritual uplift of the humans. It talks about those devotees who make spiritual demands. Every verse in Gurbani that talks of the demands being met, talks about some condition attached to it for the spiritual traveller. For example

1. जो मंगा मेरी मंगा पंजाव अपने भवभ विदेष || बढ़ तरज तुम तुम स्टीरेड भिन्देब महान अंतर ||
   “Whatever I ask for, I receive; I have total faith in my Master. Says Nanak, I have met with the Perfect Guru, and all my fears have been dispelled” (AGGS P.619)

2. जो मंगा मेरी मंगा पंजाव हरि वे स्वत समर्पित || सत्स भव घुंघरे वे हुंसी बदन सत सृजित समर्पित || केशं केशं वदं विदिश तम मंदिरं सतिरं समर्पित || अविलामी मंद सुधिये ने तलव मंद मन्निरं समर्पित ||
   “Whatever I ask for, I receive; I have completely submitted to the Lord the source of nectar. I am released from the bondage of birth and death, and so I cross over the terrifying world-ocean. Searching and seeking, I have come to understand the essence of reality; the slave of the Lord of

648 इत्यद्वारा अनुसरण पुरुष पर्यावरण (पृष्ट १२६५)
649 इत्यद्वारा अनुसरण पुरुष पर्यावरण (पृष्ट १२६६)
the Universe is dedicated to Him. If you desire eternal bliss, O Nanak, ever remember the Lord in meditation.” (AGGS P.714)

3. \textit{hir jn rwKy gur goivMd kMiT lwie Avgux siB myty dieAwl purK bKsMd jo mwgih Twkur Apuny qy soeI soeI dyvY nwnk dwsu muK qy jo bolY eIhw aUhw scu hovY (pMnw 681)}

“The Guru, the Lord of the Universe, has saved the Lord’s humble servant. Hugging me close in His embrace, the merciful, forgiving Lord has erased all my sins. Whatever I ask for from my Lord and Master, he gives that to me. Whatever the Lord’s slave Nanak utters with his mouth is true, here and hereafter.”

It should be clear by now that meeting the demands in Gurbani refers to the demand made by those who opt for spiritual beatitude. There remains hardly any difference between such people and God when He meets all their demands. Since they are ever blissfully remembering God, they advise the others to do the same and instead of asking for worldly pleasures seek spiritual glory. The Guru therefore advises that if you do have to ask God for something then ask for spiritual uplift.

1. \textit{mwgnw mwgnu nIkw hir jsu gur qy mwgnw (pMnw 1018)}

“If you must beg then know what to beg — it is noble to beg for the Lord’s Praise from the Guru.”

2. \textit{jau mwgih qau mwgih bIAw jw qy kusl n kwhU QIAw mwgin mwg eykih mwg nwnk jw qy prih prwg (pMnw 258)}

“Whenever you ask for something, you ask for worldly things; no one has obtained happiness from these. If you must ask for a gift, then ask for the One Lord. O Nanak, by Him, you shall be saved.”

3. \textit{mwgau dwnu ikrpwl ikrpw iniD myrw muKu swkq sMig n jutsI ry (pMnw 535)}

\textit{650 ipqw pUq eykY rMig lIny (pMnw 1141) ipqw pUq ril kInI sWJ (pMnw 1141) 205}

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650 பிரகு புட்பாம் பிரகு பிரகுன் பிரகு பிரகு (பேல் 994) பிரகு புட்பாம் பிரகு பிரகு (பேல் 994)
“I beg this blessing of You, O Merciful Lord, ocean of mercy — please, don’t bring me face to face with the faithless cynics.” (AGGS P.535)

4. "I beg for the Gift of Your Name, O my Lord and Master. Nothing else shall go along with me in the end; by Your Grace, please allow me to sing Your glorious praises. Power, wealth, various pleasures and enjoyments, all are just like the shadow of a tree. Man runs endlessly around in many directions, but all of his pursuits are useless. Except for the Lord of the Universe, everything he desires is transitory.” (AGGS P.713)

5. "I beg for one gift only from the Lord. May all my desires be fulfilled, meditating on, and remembering Your Name, O Lord.” (AGGS P. 682)

As a matter of fact when the devotee reaches a certain stage of spirituality he becomes desire less.

THE END
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